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THE WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

IN VERSE AND PROSE

NOW FIRST BROUGHT TOGETHER

WITH MANY PIECES NOT BEFORE PUBLISHED

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EDITED

With Prefaces Notes and Appendices

BY

HARRY BUXTON FORMAN

IN EIGHT VOLUMES

Fifth Volume—Prose I

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SHELLEY'S WORKS IN VERSE AND PROSE

VOLUME V

The rule of criticism to be adopted in judging of the life, actions, and words of a man who has acted any conspicuous part in the revolutions of the world, should not be narrow. We ought to form a general image of his character and of his doctrines, and refer to this whole the distinct portions of action and speech by which they are diversified.

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PREFACE.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE plan on which the present edition of Shelley's Prose Works is arranged is substantially the same as that adopted in the Library Edition of his Poetry. The Works issued by Shelley himself are reproduced chronologically with all their title-pages &c., in the same exact manner, no change, however minute, being made without a record of it; and the posthumous writings follow in a separate arrangement. Of these I have, as in dealing with the Poetry, separated original writings from Translations; and while the independent division of "Juvenilia" has been dropped, it has been necessary, in the nature of things, to introduce a new division of writings not intended for publication—the Letters.

The reason for abandoning the division "Juvenilia" for the Prose Works is that the distinction between Shelley's last immature prose publication and his first mature one is not marked in the same broad and unmistakable way as the distinction between the last published Poem of his boyhood and the first of his maturity. Between *Queen Mab* and *Alastor* there is a great gulf fixed;

because they must be judged as Works of Art; but the Prose Works which he published illustrate the practical side of his character more than the poetic side; the developement of his intellectual powers rather than the growth and culture of those moral forces which constitute the poetic temperament. And the two worthless Romances of his boyhood are just as remarkable instances of practical energy and prompt realization of a scheme as any of the admirable works by which they were succeeded. The first really good thing he published is in prose, the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough;* and that issued from the press more than three years earlier than his first good volume of Poetry, *Alastor*. The *Letter* would be distinctly out of place in an Appendix of "Juvenilia"; and what the mature Shelley's fame loses (if it can indeed be said to lose) by the insertion of the two absurd Romances at the beginning of his Prose Works, his character for practical energy gains by the arrangement of all his prose publications in one series. None of us can do anything for his glory as a Poet—it is assured, eternal, and radiant; but I submit that the practical boy and man is not yet half appreciated; and it is mainly in illustration of this side of his character that a number of early letters on literary subjects have been introduced into this collection.

A very large proportion of the posthumous prose writings is comprised in the two volumes of Essays, Letters,

Translations and Fragments issued by Mrs. Shelley in 1840; but not one of Shelley's own prose publications was reissued in that collection, unless we reckon as his the *History of a Six Weeks' Tour*, in which he certainly took a very active part. While bringing that posthumous collection and his own publications together, I have also included every essay or fragment of an essay known to me as having been published in any of the numerous books about Shelley: I have been fortunate enough to obtain a good deal that was unpublished; and, although it has been no part of the scheme to make a complete collection of Shelley's Letters, it will be seen that the sixty-eight given by Mrs. Shelley have grown to a hundred and twenty-seven,—twenty-one letters written in the years preceding Shelley's final departure from England in 1818, and a hundred and six "Letters from Italy." The greater part of the additional letters are from outlying sources: they include nearly all the scattered letters of Shelley given in lives of the poet and books and articles about him; but the great mass of letters in Hogg's Life of Shelley has not been drawn upon at all, the book being accessible and the letters mainly of biographical rather than literary interest; and the letters in the *Shelley Memorials*, a stereotyped book of high authority in good circulation, have not been incorporated, as they of course should be in a collection of Shelley's miscellaneous letters.

Before each Work or Section in these volumes will be found, in a note, such particulars as to history and bibliography as seem essential; but a consideration of these prose writings in the mass and seriatim has suggested a few additional observations which may more fitly be made in a Preface to the first collected edition of Shelley's Prose Works,—an edition embodying, it is believed, all his prose essays of any importance which are extant.

First, then, as to the two Romances,—a somewhat curious speculation suggests itself. Ever since Shelley's works have been a subject of serious study to me, I have had an impression that there was something more in the method of manufacture of *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne* than mere indebtedness to *Zofloya or the Moor* and so on,—that in fact a good deal in these two juvenilities was translated or paraphrased from another tongue. The grounds upon which this impression obtained were the notable frequency of foreign idioms, the precocity of certain descriptions of passionate scenes, and the fact that in *St. Irvyne* there are two distinct sets of characters and incidents alternating in the story and very clumsily put together. In *Zastrozzi* the impression is more of laboured imitation than of actual translation. It seems to me that the repeated accounts of Matilda's violent passions are beyond the probabilities of so youthful an imagination as Shelley's at that time, and were more likely to have been taken from some unpleasant

foreign book which he did not more than half understand. I doubt whether he would not have thought the first half of page 108 indelicate, had it conveyed a distinct series of impressions to his mind. And the grotesque exuberance of page 115 has much the same character. These and many other passages it seems to me almost impossible to regard as the inventions of a boy.

But in *St. Irvyne*, beside the two ill-fitting threads of fable, representing, or meant to represent, continental life, and altogether extremely un-English in treatment, we have a great number of instances in which the idiom is no more English than the conception. At page 223 Wolfstein says "Seek for proof in my heart, . . . and then will *the convinced Megalena* know" &c. At page 235 we read "*Now were it well* for a while to leave Eloise at St. Irvyne, and retrace the events which, *since five years*," &c. Page 236 contains the words "ere long they had entered" in the sense of "not long after they had entered," the phrase "Now might we almost suppose," and again "Now had they gained the summit of the mountain." At page 243 we are told that Eloise "required unexampled care to prevent those feelings . . . *to get* the better of the judgment"; and on the next page we find the sentence "Now had sunk the orb of day, and the shades of twilight began to scatter duskiness through the chamber of death." At page 252 is the following scrap of philosophy:—"involuntary disgust

follows the attachment founded on the visionary fabric of passion or interest. It sinks in the merited abyss of ennui, or is followed by apathy and carelessness, which amply its origin deserved,"—instead of "which its origin amply deserved." On the same page *inconsequent* is used to signify *of no consequence* (*importance*), as if *unwichtig* had been wrongly rendered through oversight. At page 257 is an equally notable suggestion of German, in the sentence "Never would your mind have attained" &c., "had not I watched over its every movement, and taught the sentiment, as it unfolded itself, to despise contented vulgarity." Here it is difficult to believe that the inappropriate expression *the sentiment* is other than a wrong rendering of *das Gefühl*, the meaning of which, according to the context, may be either *the sentiment* in the concrete, or *feeling*, *sensibility* in the abstract. The separation of *away* from *died*, in another sentence on the same page, "his voice died, in a clear and melancholy cadence, away," is also very suggestive, and recurs at the top of page 261. Page 263 yields the extraordinary construction, "with each moment of his absence, became lessened the conviction of his friendship, and heightened the suspicions which . . . possessed her bosom."

The internal evidences of which these are samples might be insufficient by themselves to justify me in calling attention to this aspect of the Romances; but

there is something in the shape of external evidence. Mr. Rossetti, in the memoir prefixed to his 1878 edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, has called attention to an article in *Fraser's Magazine* for June 1841, Chapter IV of *A Newspaper Editor's Reminiscences*, in which there is a good deal about "the early history of Shelley." Among other things the Newspaper Editor tells us that, apparently at some time between October 1811 and March 1812, that is to say clearly after the publication of *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*, Shelley came up to London and passed three days with him. "On this visit to the metropolis, he had brought with him the MS. of three tales, one original, the other two translations from the German, which were written in a common school ciphering book. He offered them to three or four booksellers for ten pounds, but could not find a purchaser. On the evening which preceded my departure, he insisted upon my accepting them as a token for remembrance. They were of a very wild and romantic description, but full of energy. I kept them," says the writer, "until about the year 1822, when I lent them for perusal to a friend . . . When I applied for them again at the end of some months, I had the mortification of hearing that they had been lost. Two years ago, taking up by chance a paper called the *Novelist*, I saw in it one of those tales as a reprint. How it obtained publication I know not. I am quite sure, from the style of the

MS. presented to me, that it was not a copy of a paper of which Shelley had preserved the original; and I am equally certain that my friend did not deceive me when he informed me that he had lost the book in which it was written."

We are of course to understand that the manuscript shewed too much revision to be "a copy of a paper of which Shelley had preserved the original"; and the Newspaper Editor does not seem to have been struck by the alternative that his friend's gift might be the original of a copy from which publication had already been effected. Such however was certainly the case in regard to the tale which he identified, and I think very probably in regard to the whole bookful. Mr. Rossetti clearly shews that the newspaper editor was very inaccurate in many points; but we are now in a position to certify to a further inaccuracy; for whereas *The Necessity of Atheism* will be seen from the reprint in the present edition to have issued from a Worthing press, the Newspaper Editor records that it was printed at Brighton. Thus we must not trust the writer for exactness of detail, and may, I think, having regard to the general tone and character of his remarks, classify him with Medwin as a well-intentioned narrator with an essentially inexact turn of mind. This *Novelist* then, in which he found his friend's early tale as a reprint, is not to be found by any one else; but the title is a fairly good shot. In *The*

Romancist and Novelist's Library, No. 10, we find *Zastrozzi* reprinted; and if the fifty-two numbers of *The Romancist* which compose the two volumes dated 1839 are really the fifty-two weekly numbers for that year, this issue took place just two years and about three months before the appearance of the *Fraser* article. There is no reasonable doubt that this reprint of *Zastrozzi* is what the Newspaper Editor means: for *St. Irvyne* was not reprinted in *The Romancist* till about a year later than *Zastrozzi*; and I know of nothing else that can possibly be referred to. I should be indisposed to doubt that the manuscript book given away by Shelley on this occasion really purported to contain an original tale and two translations from the German. Now our informant does not say whether the tale he found reprinted was the original one or one of the translations; but we can scarcely doubt that it was *Zastrozzi*; and upon my theory of careful imitation that would of course be the "original" one. What then were the two translations? Perhaps something of which we have no knowledge beyond this record; but, if I am right in surmising two German originals for the two threads of *St. Irvyne*, it is by no means unlikely that these two translated tales in the ciphering book were the rough material from which the "Gentleman of the University of Oxford" put together the eccentric Romance of *St. Irvyne*.

In connection with the poet's biography, it would be

worth while to find out the originals of this book, if such exist; and I am induced to give prominence to these circumstances by the hope that some one intimately acquainted with German Fiction may be led to read these two early works of Shelley's, and may throw some light upon the method of their production by pointing out the sources of some of the memorably curious passages. Such light would have additional value as clearing a point in controversy—whether Shelley had begun the study of German thus early. Hogg says not; but my impression is that Medwin's statement in his Life of Shelley (Vol. I, page 118) is too explicit to be wholly baseless. He says that at the Oxford period Shelley shewed him, on a visit, "a volume of tales which he had himself rendered" from the German. "During half an hour that we were together, (I passed the whole day with him) I perused these MSS.," says Medwin, "and they gave me a very low idea of the literature of that country, then almost unknown in England. It was evident that the books that had fallen into his hands were from the pens of very inferior writers; and I told him he had lost his time and labour in clothing them in his own language, and that I thought he could write much better things himself." It seems to me very likely that the manuscript book of this passage is identical with that given to the Newspaper Editor.

The importance of *The Necessity of Atheism* is rather

biographical and illustrative than literary. It is true the little tract is put together cleverly, and apparently with perfect good faith; but from a strictly literary standpoint it could not be said that an irreparable loss would be sustained by its destruction. None the less its recovery seems to me a matter for great congratulation. So much hung upon this tract,—Shelley's expulsion and all its momentous issues,—so much has been said and written about it,—that to have it before us exactly as it issued from the Press at Worthing and was offered to the Oxford worthies and undergraduates was highly desirable. I had, before obtaining access to a copy of the pamphlet, restored it conjecturally upon certain data furnished by Hogg, Medwin, and a number of *The Brighton Magazine*, wherein it was reviewed with extracts; and my provisional text did not vary substantially from that now given; but the reading public is much beholden to Sir Percy and Lady Shelley for permitting their copy of the original to be used, and thus furnishing a final instead of a provisional text of this curious little work.

Some such observations would be true of the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, of which Sir Percy and Lady Shelley's copy is the only one known to me. But here the gift is still more substantial, for the Letter is excellent, and the provisional reconstruction I had made of it, on inadequate *data*, from the *Shelley Memorials* and the *Queen Mab* note in which parts of it appear, would have been very inferior

to the real thing, because much longer and more discursive. It was made up from the right materials; but I had incorporated too much of them,—had not divined, that is to say, how much, in the note to *Queen Mab*, Shelley had added to the original Letter, when eliminating the passages personal to Eaton and Lord Ellenborough. The Letter as now read in its integrity will be found to be a notable advance upon the two Irish pamphlets which it follows. It has a more convincing tone of earnestness, a closer method of developing the subject, a less faulty rhetoric, and a far smaller tendency to repetition. The subject has its advantages; and certainly Shelley was much more distinctly in his true place when championing the cause of a free press and unfettered thought in the widest sense, than when agitating for catholic emancipation, coupled with a repeal of the Union Act, as the two-fold remedy for all the griefs of Ireland.

Queen Mab of course shewed a marked accession of power when compared with the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough;* but then it shewed also such an enormous advance in literary ambition that, notwithstanding the increase of force, it remains to confess that the Poem falls far short of its object, while the Letter does not. The reissue of the *Queen Mab* note against flesh-eating, as a pamphlet, with additions, and its publication through a medical bookseller at the price of eighteen pence, was a further proof of Shelley's practical bent, and is hardly a

literary episode; while the dialogue published in the following year, *A Refutation of Deism*, is more distinctly literary than any serious work of Shelley's issued up to that time except *Queen Mab*. It marks, indeed, the close of a period,—the period in which the true poet was yet unborn—the period of practical activity and wide-eyed search after truth, when justice had far greater attractions for Shelley's mind than beauty had, and truth far greater attractions than both,—when the great balance between the good, the beautiful and the true had not dawned on him, and when his uncompromising rectitude and eager propagandism had rather the colour of a conviction of the mind than of a passion of the whole soul. But in this very year came a great and sudden change,—a change of which *Alastor* was the first full and perfect fruit, but of which earlier fruit is now in evidence: I refer to the fragment of a Romance entitled *The Assassins*.

Intellectual brilliancy, earnestness, great ease in the use of rhetoric, and an egregious practical energy, are already among the qualities to be credited to Shelley by a reader who has followed him step by step from his early boyhood to the time of the first continental trip. But in *The Assassins* there is the touch of a new quality. Eccentric, and even revolting in detail as one may find the manner of introducing the Wandering Jew, found by Albedir impaled upon a tall cedar, battling with a huge

serpent, and with a vulture waiting for his share of the man's carcass, there is yet, in the method of treating that awful picture, trace of an infinite yearning over the miseries of suffering humanity: there is no such thing as this in the admirable *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, no such thing in all *Queen Mab* or its Notes, no such thing in the brilliant sophistries of the *Refutation of Deism*. But this divine tenderness, which is eventually and for ever the distinctive characteristic of Shelley beyond all others who have risen to supremacy in executive art, appears much more clearly in the descriptive passages which make up the greater part of *The Assassins*, and perhaps above all in the account of Abdallah and Maimuna sporting with the snake.

In these passages, and more than all in that final one, we come to know that Shelley's moral nature has undergone, not so much a change as a developement,—a great and apparently sudden developement. The tenderness that lay dormant, so far as expression in literature is concerned, has been brought forth; and the man discernable at the back of this extravagant story is that Shelley who in some circumstances might have been the Saviour of the World, who was and is the great lyric poet of the modern English-speaking world, the man whose mere broken and piecemeal achievements have radiated on powerful influences over the whole habitable globe.

In this place we need not pause to enquire whence this

developement of the moral nature; but we must not omit to note the persistency of impression that brought out again in the first Canto of *Laon and Cythna* a portion of the fabric of *The Assassins*. It is well worthy of remark that the one picture, in the series of pictures embodied in that Canto, which impresses us as a thing we have seen, and not merely as a thing which some one else has seen or dreamed, is the figure of the woman standing on the shore, chaunting to the wounded snake until it crawls up out of the water and takes haven and shelter in her bosom.

We think of these things and remember the anecdote of the "great old snake" of Field Place, beloved of the little Percy, and killed by the scythe of the gardener; and almost wonder what inarticulate dirge the little boy uttered over his mutilated favourite. We inevitably recall a world of serpentine allusions in his writings; and at length the mind reverts to the curious nickname of "the Snake," given him by Byron, then to his own reference to his "fellow serpent" who was to have been burnt for sacrilege at Lucca, till we wonder how much of serious *double entendre* is in the opening line of that lovely poem to Williams—

The serpent is shut out from Paradise.

In all compositions dating after the middle of the year 1814 a new tone prevails. In view of the ultimate

glories of *Prometheus Unbound* and *Hellas* it is assuredly permissible for Shelley's most loyal and ardent admirers to avow the impression that the humanitarianism of the Irish pamphlets, and even of *Queen Mab*, has a slightly histrionic air; but that air never reappears after 1814,—we see the last of it in *A Refutation of Deism*. The new Shelley became within a short time one of the most powerful and vivid of the great descriptive writers who write straight from the heart. The letters which he sent to Peacock in 1814 are not in evidence, or we should probably find them full of fine landscape-painting: *Alastor* has certainly some of the best landscapes that exist in literature—spiritualized landscapes rather than naturalistic, it is true; and the two long letters of 1816 from Switzerland are as fine as the descriptive ones in the Italian series. This loving attitude towards external nature is balanced in the new Shelley by an intenser interest in profound questions,—a burning desire to deal with them to some good result; but ill health and the idea that he was not destined to live long appear to have unsettled the poet's mind, and thus to have led to the abandonment of scheme after scheme. By the autumn of 1815 he had begun to work upon "several literary plans," which, according to a letter printed in the third volume (page 347), he contemplated finishing in the winter. It seems likely that the fragments on the Punishment of Death, on Life, Love, and a

Future State, the Speculations on Metaphysics and on Morals, the fragment on the Revival of Literature, and the Essay on Christianity, are relics of this season of ardent but broken activity. The Essay on the Devil has the air of belonging to a period of greater power of concentration and unusually high spirits,—probably the Marlow period, one of the most eventful and fruitful in Shelley's career, and one which need not be examined in this place.

A few words are perhaps necessary on the subject of certain prose writings which Shelley is recorded to have been engaged on at different times, but which do not appear in these volumes. I believe nothing of any consequence is wanting; and it is doubtful whether anything meant for publication and not now published is extant.

In a letter to Ollier dated the 15th of December, 1819 (*Shelley Memorials*, page 123), Shelley says, "I am preparing an octavo on reform—a commonplace kind of book—which, now that I see the passion of party will postpone the great struggle till another year, I shall not trouble myself to finish for this season. I intend it to be an instructive and readable book, appealing from the passions to the reason of men." I presume the abandoned fragment of this work to be what Mrs. Shelley referred to in her preface to the *Essays* &c. (1840), when at page xviii she stated that "A Treatise on Poli-

tical Reform and other fragments remain, to be published when his works assume a complete shape." Mr. Rossetti's allusion to a book on Reform at page 147 of the memoir prefixed to his edition of Shelley's Poetical Works (1878), is based upon these two passages. Mr. Garnett, who is familiar with the family archives, tells me he can find no trace of such a book, or any further evidence of Shelley's employment upon one in 1819. The impression appears to be that Mrs. Shelley's reference was to the Marlow Pamphlet on Reform; and it seems to me possible that, as Shelley had no notion of getting the book done in 1819, he laid it aside altogether after having sketched one or two sections to add to the original pamphlet. If that be so the fragment called *A System of Government by Juries*, and the smaller fragment on Reform from the *Relics*, given in the second volume, may be all that remains of these additions.[1] If these two fragments do belong to the 1819 Reform scheme, their position would probably be after instead of before the Essays on Christianity and the Devil, and the literary Essays at the beginning of the third volume; but the dates of many of these prose fragments are at present uncertain.

Mr. Rossetti's chronological summary of minor writings (pages 148 to 150 of the memoir prefixed to his 1878 edition of Shelley's Poetry) includes (1) a fragment of a

[1] See, however, the note at p. 399 of this volume.

wild romance about a witch begun in conjunction with Medwin about the beginning of 1809; (2) a novel, "to be a deathblow to intolerance," projected at the end of 1810, "apparently the same novel which we find him soon afterwards writing in conjunction with Hogg, in the form of letters" (see Hogg's Life of Shelley, Vol. I, page 382); (3) a translation of a treatise by Buffon made in 1811; (4) a translation of Baron d'Holbach's *Système de la Nature* projected in 1812, but probably never begun; (5) *Biblical Extracts* compiled in 1812,—"a collection of passages from the Scriptures, embodying exalted moral truths and precepts, to the exclusion of dogma"; (6) "an essay or treatise of some French philosopher on the Perfectibility of the Human Species," translated in 1813; (7) Plutarch's two essays περὶ τῆς σαρκοφαγίας also translated in 1813; (8) a translation from Spinoza dictated to Mrs. Shelley in March 1820, probably the same that he was dictating to Williams in November 1821 (see Vol. IV, page 312), and, if so, the work of which a fragment is given in the third volume of this edition. Mr. Garnett tells me he has some reason to think this portion of the translation was made towards the end of 1817, adding that Mr. F. Pollock, who is engaged on a work on Spinoza, says the translation is undoubtedly from the Latin, and not, as Middleton said in a letter to *The Athenæum*, from the French. Had I recovered more of this translation I would gladly have given it; and

there might have been some temptation to publish any one of these pieces if fortune had brought them to light. But as far as I am aware these remain in much the same position as the lost volumes of published poetry and a certain number of unpublished verses which Shelley is known to have left. At present I have no evidence of the existence of any one of these prose fragments and translations; but if none of them are ever recovered, the reading public will still be in possession of a far greater mass of work from the hand of Shelley than it had any reason to expect. To recover his Roman Notebook, and complete the publication of his rough notes on sculpture, would be to confer a greater benefit on the public than would accrue from the finding of all the juvenile works just enumerated; and I find a far greater satisfaction in the recovery of the Florentine notes given in the third volume than I could imaginably have found in reprinting the *Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things* and the *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire*, if I had succeeded in obtaining copies of those two lost *juvenilia*.

Neither the lost volumes nor the missing manuscripts, however, need we deem irrecoverable in these days of eager and ceaseless disinterment. When the library edition of Shelley's Poetry was begun, the world was certainly not aware of the existence of Shelley's copy of *Laon and Cythna*, or that his own *Queen Mab* revised for *The Dæmon*

of the World was still extant: the exquisite finished manuscript of *Julian and Maddalo* was unknown, and the existence of the sonnets to the Nile and to Dante unsuspected. Since those and the numerous other manuscripts used in the course of my labours came to light, the public has had word, successively, of the papers of Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne, and those of Mr. Ollier, Shelley's publisher, among which last were the manuscript of the Marlow Reform Pamphlet, and the copy of *Hellas* written out by Williams and revised for the press by Shelley. Later still, Mrs. Shelley's copy of *Queen Mab* with autograph inscriptions by herself and Shelley has been found and sold by public auction; and in the present collection of prose writings will be found several things that were not supposed to exist, such as the numerous additional Notes on Sculptures, the Lucianic fragment called *The Elysian Fields*, the review of Peacock's *Rhododaphne* (thought to have been lost), a large portion of the translation of Plato's *Ion*, not till now known to have been finished by Shelley, several of the poet's letters; and last, but not least, the invaluable letter from Mrs. Shelley to Mrs. Gisborne, giving a detailed account of the life at Spezia and its tragic close.[1]

The whole of the documents mentioned above have been more or less waifs and strays. The Essay *On the*

[1] Published in *Macmillan's Magazine* with a number of highly interesting documents in May, 1880, with notes and remarks by myself, while these volumes were passing through the press.

Devil, and Devils, and the Letter to Leigh Hunt on the Trial of Richard Carlile, are in a different category, having been carefully preserved in the poet's family. And here begins the agreeable task of recording my gratitude to those who have given me help in getting together an authentic edition of all Shelley's Works. To Sir Percy and Lady Shelley I owe, not only the privilege of giving the world this long-expected Essay and long-desired Letter, but also most important aid in other matters. It is with Sir Percy Shelley's concurrence that a great number of letters and fragments are brought into the Collection; and it is through Lady Shelley's special courtesy that I am enabled to reprint *The Necessity of Atheism* and *A Letter to Lord Ellenborough,* and to include among the posthumous Essays that on Christianity which was first published in the *Shelley Memorials* and has not till now appeared among Shelley's Works. To Mr. Garnett I owe, beside what all the world of Shelley's lovers owes him, hearty thanks for his frank concession now of the prose as formerly of the poetic portions of his *Relics of Shelley.* These and his valuable articles in *Macmillan's Magazine* and *The Fortnightly Review,* of which Mr. Garnett has allowed me to avail myself, will be found to have enriched these volumes very largely; but beyond that I have derived much help from Mr. Garnett's readiness to correspond with me on points of difficulty and give me the advan-

tage of his special knowledge and judgment. Mr. W. M. Rossetti I have found equally ready to enter upon questions in which his far-reaching knowledge of Shelleyan literature and documents coöperates with his judicial thoroughness in dealing with facts to make his opinion of special value. My thanks are due to Mr. J. R. P. Kirby of Great Russell Street and to Mr. C. W. Frederickson of New York for furnishing me with transcripts of letters in their possession,—to Messrs. Longman & Co. for their ready concurrence in the reproduction of the letters published by Peacock in *Fraser's Magazine*,—to Messrs. Macmillan & Co. for their consent to the immediate reappearance of Mrs. Shelley's letter already referred to,—and to Mr. Trelawny for the like courtesy in regard to the letters reprinted from his *Records*. Some other debts will be found to be acknowledged in notes scattered through the volumes; but I desire to record here my hearty acknowledgment of all help given me, specified or unspecified.

Of the illustrations there are a few words to say. Mr. W. B. Scott has bestowed the most loving care on the reproduction of the only authentic portrait of the mature Shelley which is known to exist,—that by Miss Curran, in Sir Percy Shelley's possession; and it seems to me that some subtleties of expression have here been caught and rendered with the etching-point in a manner which the more mechanical method of the current engravings

almost of necessity precluded. The view of the corner of Field Place was taken by Dr. Evershed when he did the front view for the fourth volume of the Poetical Works,—that is to say in June 1877. At that time Dr. Evershed's sketches represented with absolute fidelity the fine old mansion where the poet was born; and possibly they do so still; but, if the pretty vignette lately issued on the title-page of the Golden Treasury selection from Shelley's Poetry be correct, considerable alterations must have been recently made in the front of the house. The corner view given as a frontispiece to the third of the present volumes has for its special object to shew the other aspect of that part of the house where the poet first saw the light. The chimney-stack indicates the position of the upstairs room where he was born, and the window is in the front of the house. The event is commemorated by means of an engraved plate over the fire-place: the inscription is as follows—

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
WAS BORN IN THIS CHAMBER
AUGUST 4TH 1792.

SHRINE OF THE DAWNING SPEECH AND THOUGHT
OF SHELLEY, SACRED BE
TO ALL WHO BOW WHERE TIME HAS BROUGHT
GIFTS TO ETERNITY.[1]

[1] It is right to record that the quatrain is by Mr. Garnett.

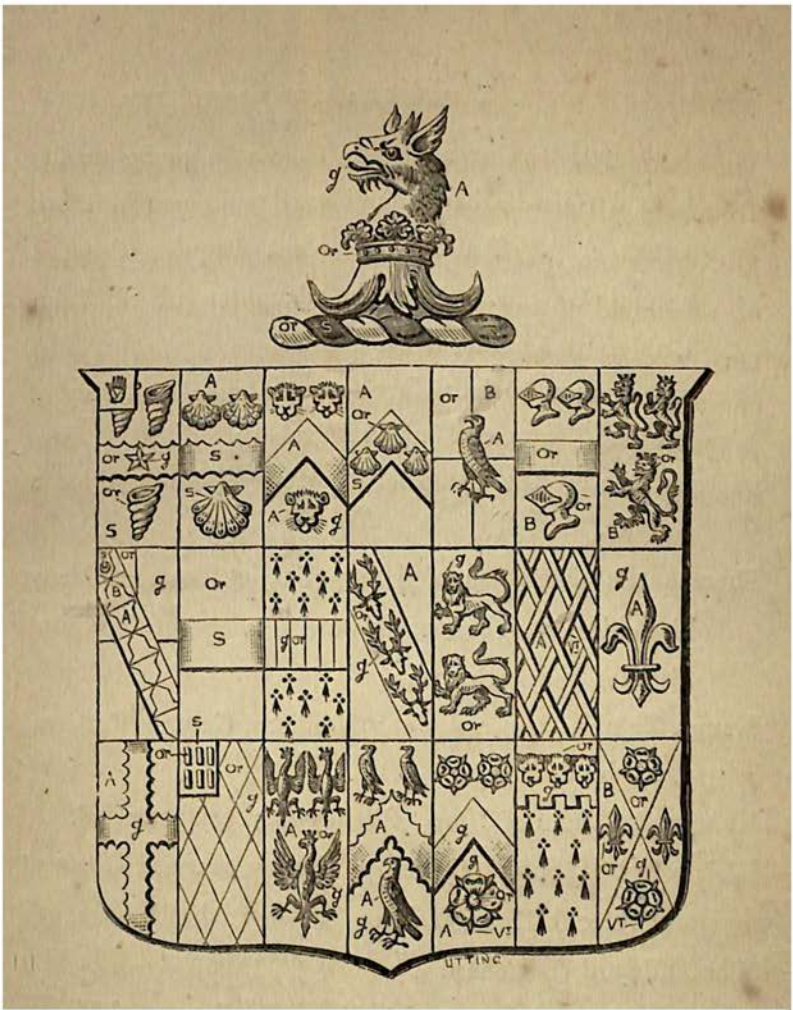
The etching of Casa Magni shews Shelley's last dwelling place and its beautiful surroundings as they now are. The house has been heightened since it was occupied by the Shelleys and their friends; but I was anxious to secure an exact record of it while yet standing, for I am told the sea is encroaching and must inevitably demolish the Villa. For this record I am indebted to Mr. Henry Roderick Newman of Florence, who went to Lerici last year and made for me an excellent and faithful water-colour drawing, which has been reproduced as an etching by Dr. Evershed. The frontispiece to the second volume is a fac-simile of one of Shelley's sketches of trees, of which Hunt and others have spoken. It is a very happy specimen of the poet's undisciplined art; and Mr. G. F. Tupper has reproduced it so exactly that the public can form an accurate opinion of Shelley's graceful draughtsmanship.

It only remains to speak of the Shelley Pedigree. As far as I am aware no Pedigree of the poet has ever been published; and this seemed to me so notable a want that I enquired at the College of Arms what Pedigree was among the records there. Mr. Stephen Tucker with the readiest kindness made the search for me, and found the remarkable Genealogy which is inserted in the present volume. I am told that not even an extract from it has ever been printed; and I wish to record my warm thanks to Mr. Tucker for placing at my

disposal a certified copy of the Pedigree and its Proofs from which the documents are here given. The Pedigree speaks for itself to any careful reader; and a glance at the shield of twenty-one quarterings on the following page will, to those who have the slightest knowledge of heraldry, be highly significant in regard to the ancestry of England's second great republican poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

H. BUXTON FORMAN.

38, Marlborough Hill, St. John's Wood,
June, 1880.



Proofs to the foregoing Pedigree of Shelley.

Copied from an ancient Manuscript in the possession of the Family.

Edward the eldest Son of Henry Shelley died in his young yeares.

Henry the second Sonn of Henry Shelley married Frys-with the daughter of Sr. Tho. Walsingham - Knight

who dyed leaving no Issue. Then he tooke to his second Wife Barbara the eldest daughter of William Crowmer of Tunstoll in Kent Esquier (by his second Wife Elizabeth the daughter of S^{r}. John Guldeford Knight) & hath Issue,

Thomas, Henry, Richard, Walter, Ambrose, and James, Barbara, Frances, Mary & Elizabeth.

Barbara Shelley the daughter of Henry Shelley dyed a Mayde.

Thomas the eldest Son of Henry Shelley married Mary the eldest daughter of Edward Goringe of Okehurst Esquier and hath Issue,

Henry, Thomas, Edward, John, William, George, Barbara, Dorothy & Mary.

Henry y^{e} 2 Sonn of Henry Shelley is yet Unmarried.

Richard y^{e} 3^{d}. Sonn of Henry Shelley married Jone y^{e} daughter & Heire of John Fuste and hath Issue,

John, Edward & Richard.

Walter Ambrose & James y^{e} 4th. 5th. & 6th. Sonnes of Henry Shelley ar yet unmarried.

Barbara y^{e} eldest daughter of Henry Shelley married Tho. the eldest Sonn of John Middleton of Horsham Esqui^{r}. & hath Issue John and Francis a Daughter.

Francis y^{e} 2 daughter of Henry Shelley married William Holland of Chichester Gen. & hath Issue.

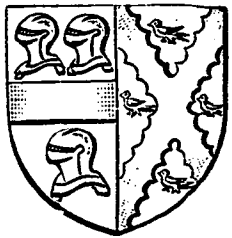
Mary & Elisabeth y^{e} daughters of Henry Shelley ar yet not married.

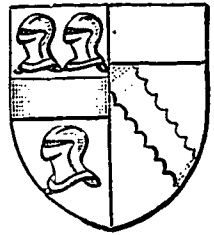
BRASSES ON A GRAVE STONE

IN THE

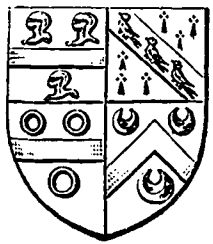
SOUTH CHANCEL

OF THE



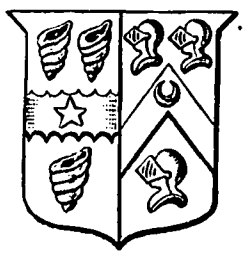


Of yor charite pray for the Soules of Pawle Yden gentleman the Sone of Thomas Yden Esquyer, & Agnes his Wyf, ye whiche Pawle decessed the VI day of August in the Ye'r of our Lord 1564, on whose Soules Jhū have mercy Amen.



CHURCH OF PENSHURST IN THE COUNTY OF KENT.

On a large Monument of Sussex Marble Ornamented with Brasses in the Chancel of Worminghurst Church.

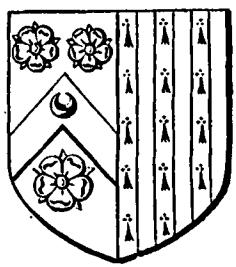


Of your Charite pray for the Soules of Edward Shelley Esquier some time one of the four Masters of the Housholde with the Most Virtuous Prince King Henry the VIII and King Edward the VI and to our Sov^r^ayn Lady Quene Marye. and Johan his Wyfe daughter and Heyre of Poll Iden of Kent which Edwarde dyed the IX day of October A°. Dn̄i M°. V° liiij and the sayd Johane dyed the V day of February M°. V°. liij whose Soules Jeh̄s Pedon̄.

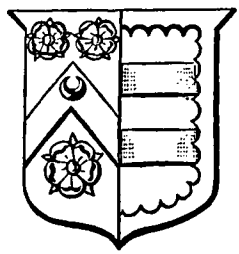
In the Church of Worth in the Co^{y}. of Sussex.

Hear Lies Enterd the Body of Ann Bysshe Wife of Roger Bysshe of Fenn Place Esq^{r}. and Daughter of Philip Jermain of Lordington in this County Esq^{r}. Sargent at Law.

She departed this life the 28th. Oct^{r}. Anno Dom: 1661 Ætatis væ 32.



On a Mural Monument at the East end of the Nave in the Church of Worth aforesaid.



In a Vault beneath this Monument is Entered the Bodies of Roger Bysshe of Fenn Place in the Parish of Worth Esq^r^. who departed this life March the 21^st^ 1702 in the 81^st^ year of his age and of Ellen his 2^d^ Wife daughter of John Parr of Kempes in the Kingdom of Ireland Gent: She departed this life June the 18^th^ 1700 aged 62 years whose consumate Virtues were so exemplary as may be a pattern to all their Posterity. They left two Daughters Elizabeth married to Francis Wyatt of Freemans in Sussex Esq^r^. and Hellen married to John Shelley of Fenn Place Esq^r^. This Monument was erected at the Charge of Mr^s^. Elizabeth Bradford She died May the 18^th^ 1725 and is buried near this place was Daughter of John Bradford D. D. by Jane his Wife daughter of John Parr of Kempes Gent.

ZASTROZZI,

A ROMANCE.

[*Zastrozzi* appears to be the first substantive work issued by Shelley: Medwin (*Shelley Papers*, 1833, p. 10) says Shelley told him that some chapters of it were written by Harriet Grove, the poet's cousin and first love. Mr. D. F. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, 1872, pp. 11 and 12) records that it was published on the 5th of June, 1810, and advertized in *The Times* on the 5th and 12th. There are at least three extant though unpublished letters of Shelley's bearing on the date of *Zastrozzi's* composition and publication. In one dated the 7th of May, 1809, he says he means to finish and publish "a Romance," of which he has already written "a large portion," but does not expect "any pecuniary advantage." In one dated the 1st of April, 1810, he complains that Robinson "will take no trouble about the reviewers," makes arrangements therefore himself for the "venal villains" to be "pouched," asks that the reviews may be sent to Field Place, and says seriously that "it is of consequence in fiction to establish your name as high as you can in the literary lists." In the third letter dated the 29th of May, 1810, he requests that a copy of *Zastrozzi* may be sent "directly" to a correspondent to whom he has already written to say it is coming: that is all there is about it in the letter; and I think if it had not been published at that time, there would have been a great deal about hurrying on the printer and publisher. This Romance is a duodecimo volume, consisting of fly-title, *Zastrozzi, a Romance*, with imprint at foot, *Printed by S. Hamilton, Weybridge*, title-page as given opposite, and 252 pages of text with the head-line *Zastrozzi* throughout. This book was reprinted as the work of Shelley in No. 10 of *The Romancist, and Novelist's Library* (London, 1839).—H. B. F.]

ZASTROZZI,

A ROMANCE.

BY

P. B. S.

——That their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works—This would surpass
Common revenge.

PARADISE LOST.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR G. WILKIE AND J. ROBINSON
57, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1810.

ZASTROZZI,

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER I.

TORN from the society of all he held dear on earth, the victim of secret enemies, and exiled from happiness, was the wretched Verezzi!

All was quiet; a pitchy darkness involved the face of things, when, urged by fiercest revenge, Zastrozzi placed himself at the door of the inn where, undisturbed, Verezzi slept.

Loudly he called the landlord. The landlord, to whom the bare name of Zastrozzi was terrible, trembling obeyed the summons.

"Thou knowest Verezzi the Italian? he lodges here." "He does," answered the landlord.

"Him, then, have I devoted to destruction," exclaimed Zastrozzi. "Let Ugo and Bernardo follow you to his apartment; I will be with you to prevent mischief."

Cautiously they ascended—successfully they executed their revengeful purpose, and bore the sleeping Verezzi to the place, where a chariot waited to convey the vindictive Zastrozzi's prey to the place of its destination.

Ugo and Bernardo lifted the still sleeping Verezzi into the chariot. Rapidly they travelled onwards for several hours. Verezzi was still wrapped in deep sleep, from which all the movements he had undergone had been insufficient to rouse him.

Zastrozzi and Ugo were masked, as was Bernardo, who acted as postilion.

It was still dark, when they stopped at a small inn, on a remote and desolate heath; and waiting but to change horses, again advanced. At last day appeared—still the slumbers of Verezzi remained unbroken.

Ugo fearfully questioned Zastrozzi as to the cause of his extraordinary sleep. Zastrozzi, who, however, was well acquainted with it, gloomily answered, "I know not."

Swiftly they travelled during the whole of the day, over which nature seemed to have drawn her most gloomy curtain.—They stopped occasionally at inns to change horses and obtain refreshments.

Night came on—they forsook the beaten track, and, entering an immense forest, made their way slowly through the rugged underwood.

At last they stopped—they lifted their victim from the chariot, and bore him to a cavern, which yawned in a dell close by.

Not long did the hapless victim of unmerited persecution enjoy an oblivion which deprived him of a knowledge of his horrible situation. He awoke—and overcome by excess of terror, started violently from the ruffians' arms.

They had now entered the cavern—Verezzi supported himself against a fragment of rock which jutted out.

"Resistance is useless," exclaimed Zastrozzi; "following us in submissive silence can alone procure the slightest mitigation of your punishment."

Verezzi followed as fast as his frame, weakened by unnatural sleep, and enfeebled by recent illness, would permit; yet, scarcely believing that he was awake, and not thoroughly convinced of the reality of the scene before him, he viewed every thing with that kind of inexplicable horror, which a terrible dream is wont to excite.

After winding down the rugged descent for some time, they arrived at an iron door, which at first sight appeared to be part of the rock itself. Every thing had till now been obscured by total darkness; and Verezzi, for the first time, saw the masked faces of his persecutors, which a torch brought by Bernardo rendered visible.

The massy door flew open.

The torches from without rendered the darkness which reigned within still more horrible; and Verezzi beheld the interior of this cavern as a place whence he was never again about to emerge—as his grave. Again he struggled with his persecutors, but his enfeebled frame was insufficient to support a conflict with the strong-nerved Ugo, and, subdued, he sank fainting into his arms.

His triumphant persecutor bore him into the damp cell, and chained him to the wall. An iron chain encircled his waist; his limbs, which not even a little straw kept from the rock, were fixed by immense staples to the flinty floor; and but one of his hands was left at liberty, to take the scanty pittance of bread and water which was daily allowed him.

Every thing was denied him but thought, which, by comparing the present with the past, was his greatest torment.

Ugo entered the cell every morning and evening, to bring coarse bread, and a pitcher of water, seldom, yet sometimes, accompanied by Zastrozzi.

In vain did he implore mercy, pity, and even death: useless were all his enquiries concerning the cause of his barbarous imprisonment—a stern silence was maintained by his relentless gaoler.

Languishing in painful captivity, Verezzi passed days and nights seemingly countless, in the same monotonous uniformity of horror and despair. He scarcely now shuddered when the slimy lizard crossed his naked and

motionless limbs. The large earth-worms, which twined themselves in his long and matted hair, almost ceased to excite sensations of horror.

Days and nights were undistinguishable from each other; and the period which he had passed there, though in reality but a few weeks, was lengthened by his perturbed imagination into many years. Sometimes he scarcely supposed that his torments were earthly, but that Ugo, whose countenance bespoke him a demon, was the fury who blasted his reviving hopes. His mysterious removal from the inn near Munich also confused his ideas, and he never could bring his thoughts to any conclusion on the subject which occupied them.

One evening, overcome by long watching, he sank to sleep, for almost the first time since his confinement, when he was aroused by a loud crash, which seemed to burst over the cavern. Attentively he listened—he even hoped, though hope was almost dead within his breast. Again he listened—again the same noise was repeated—it was but a violent thunder-storm which shook the elements above.

Convinced of the folly of hope, he addressed a prayer to his Creator—to Him who hears a suppliant from the bowels of the earth. His thoughts were elevated above terrestrial enjoyments—his sufferings sank into nothing on the comparison.

Whilst his thoughts were thus employed, a more violent crash shook the cavern. A scintillating flame

darted from the ceiling [1] to the floor. Almost at the same instant the roof fell in.

A large fragment of the rock was laid athwart the cavern; one end being grooved into the solid wall, the other having almost forced open the massy iron door.

Verezzi was chained to a piece of rock which remained immoveable. The violence of the storm was past, but the hail descended rapidly, each stone of which wounded his naked limbs. Every flash of lightning, although now distant, dazzled his eyes, unaccustomed as they had been to the least ray of light.

The storm at last ceased, the pealing thunders died away in indistinct murmurs, and the lightning was too faint to be visible. Day appeared—no one had yet been to the cavern—Verezzi concluded that they either intended him to perish with hunger, or that some misfortune, by which they themselves had suffered, had occurred. In the most solemn manner, therefore, he now prepared himself for death, which he was fully convinced within himself was rapidly approaching.

His pitcher of water was broken by the falling fragments, and a small crust of bread was all that now remained of his scanty allowance of provisions.

A burning fever raged through his veins; and, delirious with despairing illness, he cast from him the

[1] In the original, *cieling*.

crust which alone could now retard the rapid advances of death.

Oh! what ravages did the united efforts of disease and suffering make on the manly and handsome figure of Verezzi! His bones had almost started through his skin; his eyes were sunken and hollow; and his hair, matted with the damps, hung in strings upon his faded cheek. The day passed as had the morning—death was every instant before his eyes—a lingering death by famine—he felt its approaches: night came, but with it brought no change. He was aroused by a noise against the iron door: it was the time when Ugo usually brought fresh provisions. The noise lessened, at last it totally ceased—with it ceased all hope of life in Verezzi's bosom. A cold tremor pervaded his limbs—his eyes but faintly presented to his imagination the ruined cavern—he sank, as far as the chain which encircled his waist would permit him, upon the flinty pavement; and, in the crisis of the fever which then occurred, his youth and good constitution prevailed.

CHAPTER II.

In the meantime Ugo, who had received orders from Zastrozzi not to allow Verezzi to die, came at the accustomed hour to bring provisions, but finding that, in the last night's storm, the rock had been struck by lightning, concluded that Verezzi had lost his life amid the ruins, and he went with this news to Zastrozzi.—Zastrozzi, who, for inexplicable reasons, wished not Verezzi's death, sent Ugo and Bernardo to search for him.

After a long scrutiny, they discovered their hapless victim. He was chained to the rock where they had left him, but in that exhausted condition, which want of food, and a violent fever, had reduced him to.

They unchained him, and lifting him into a chariot, after four hours rapid travelling, brought the insensible Verezzi to a cottage, inhabited by an old woman alone. The cottage stood on an immense heath, lonely, desolate, and remote from other human habitation.

Zastrozzi awaited their arrival with impatience: eagerly he flew to meet them, and, with a demoniac

smile, surveyed the agonised features of his prey, who lay insensible and stretched on the shoulders of Ugo.

"His life must not be lost," exclaimed Zastrozzi; "I have need of it. Tell Bianca, therefore, to prepare a bed."

Ugo obeyed, and Bernardo followed, bearing the emaciated Verezzi. A physician was sent for, who declared, that the crisis of the fever which had attacked him being past, proper care might reinstate him; but that the disorder having attacked his brain, a tranquillity of mind was absolutely necessary for his recovery.

Zastrozzi, to whom the life, though not the happiness of Verezzi was requisite, saw that his too eager desire for revenge had carried him beyond his point. He saw that some deception was requisite; he accordingly instructed the old woman to inform him, when he recovered, that he was placed in this situation, because the physicians had asserted that the air of this country was necessary for a recovery from a brain fever which had attacked him.

It was long before Verezzi recovered—long did he languish in torpid insensibility, during which his soul seemed to have winged its way to happier regions.

At last, however, he recovered, and the first use he made of his senses was to inquire where he was.

The old woman told him the story, which she had been instructed in by Zastrozzi.

"Who ordered me then to be chained in that desolate and dark cavern," inquired Verezzi, "where I have been for many years, and suffered most insupportable torments?"

"Lord bless me!" said the old woman: "why, baron, how strangely you talk! I begin to fear you will again lose your senses, at the very time when you ought to be thanking God for suffering them to return to you. What can you mean by being chained in a cavern? I declare I am frightened at the very thought: pray do compose yourself."

Verezzi was much perplexed by the old woman's assertions. That Julia should send him to a mean cottage, and desert him, was impossible.

The old woman's relation seemed so well connected, and told with such an air of characteristic simplicity, that he could not disbelieve her.

But to doubt the evidence of his own senses, and the strong proofs of his imprisonment, which the deep marks of the chains had left till now, was impossible,

Had not those marks still remained, he would have conceived the horrible events which had led him thither to have been but the dreams of his perturbed imagination. He, however, thought it better to yield, since, as Ugo and Bernardo attended him in the short walks he was able to take, an escape was impossible, and its attempt would but make his situation more unpleasant.

He often expressed a wish to write to Julia, but the old woman said she had orders neither to permit him to write nor receive letters—on pretence of not agitating his mind; and to avoid the consequences of despair, knives were denied him.

As Verezzi recovered, and his mind obtained that firm tone which it was wont to possess, he perceived that it was but a device of his enemies that detained him at the cottage, and his whole thoughts were now bent upon the means for effecting his escape.

It was late one evening, when, tempted by the peculiar beauty of the weather, Verezzi wandered beyond the usual limits, attended by Ugo and Bernardo, who narrowly watched his every movement. Immersed in thought, he wandered onwards, till he came to a woody eminence, whose beauty tempted him to rest a little, in a seat carved in the side of an ancient oak. Forgetful of his unhappy and dependent situation, he sat there some time, until Ugo told him that it was time to return.

In their absence, Zastrozzi had arrived at the cottage. He had impatiently enquired for Verezzi.

"It is the baron's custom to walk every evening," said Bianca; "I soon expect him to return."

Verezzi at last arrived.

Not knowing Zastrozzi as he entered, he started back, overcome by the likeness he bore to one of the men he had seen in the cavern.

He was now convinced that all the sufferings which he had undergone in that horrible abode of misery were not imaginary, and that he was at this instant in the power of his bitterest enemy.

Zastrozzi's eyes were fixed on him with an expression too manifest to be misunderstood; and with an air in which he struggled to disguise the natural malevolence of his heart, he said, that he hoped Verezzi's health had not suffered from the evening air.

Enraged beyond measure at this hypocrisy, from a man whom he now no longer doubted to be the cause of all his misfortunes, he could not forbear inquiring for what purpose he had conveyed him hither, and told him instantly to release him.

Zastrozzi's cheeks turned pale with passion, his lips quivered, his eyes darted revengeful glances, as thus he spoke:—

"Retire to your chamber, young fool, which is the fittest place for you to reflect on, and repent of, the insolence shown to one so much your superior."

"I fear nothing," interrupted Verezzi, "from your vain threats and empty denunciations of vengeance: justice, Heaven! is on my side, and I must eventually triumph."

What can be a greater proof of the superiority of virtue, than that the terrible, the dauntless Zastrozzi trembled! for he did tremble; and, conquered by the emotions of the moment, paced the circumscribed apart-

ment with unequal steps. For an instant he shrunk within himself: he thought of his past life, and his awakened conscience reflected images of horror. But again revenge drowned the voice of virtue—again passion obscured the light of reason, and his steeled soul persisted in its scheme.

Whilst he still thought, Ugo entered. Zastrozzi, smothering his stinging conscience, told Ugo to follow him to the heath.—Ugo obeyed.

CHAPTER III.

ZASTROZZI and Ugo proceeded along the heath, on the skirts of which stood the cottage. Verezzi leaned against the casement, when a low voice, which floated in indistinct murmurs on the silence of the evening, reached his ear.—He listened attentively. He looked into the darkness, and saw the towering form of Zastrozzi, and Ugo, whose awkward, ruffian-like gait, could never be mistaken. He could not hear their discourse, except a few detached words which reached his ears. They seemed to be denunciations of anger; a low tone afterwards succeeded, and it appeared as if a dispute, which had arisen between them, was settled: their voices at last died away in distance.

Bernardo now left the room: Bianca entered; but Verezzi plainly heard Bernardo lingering at the door.

The old woman continued sitting in silence at a remote corner of the chamber. It was Verezzi's hour for supper:—he desired Bianca to bring it. She obeyed, and brought some dried raisins in a plate. He was surprised to see a knife was likewise brought; an indul-

gence he imputed to the inadvertency of the old woman.—A thought started across his mind—it was now time to escape.

He seized the knife—he looked expressively at the old woman—she trembled. He advanced from the casement to the door: he called for Bernardo—Bernardo entered, and Verezzi, lifting his arm high, aimed the knife at the villain's heart.—Bernardo started aside, and the knife was fixed firmly in the doorcase. Verezzi attempted by one effort to extricate it. The effort was vain. Bianca, as fast as her tottering limbs could carry her, hastened through the opposite door, calling loudly for Zastrozzi.

Verezzi attempted to rush through the open door, but Bernardo opposed himself to it. A long and violent contest ensued, and Bernardo's superior strength was on the point of overcoming Verezzi, when the latter, by a dexterous blow, precipitated him down the steep and narrow staircase.

Not waiting to see the event of his victory, he rushed through the opposite door, and meeting with no opposition, ran swiftly across the heath.

The moon, in tranquil majesty, hung high in air, and showed the immense extent of the plain before him. He continued rapidly advancing, and the cottage was soon out of sight. He thought that he heard Zastrozzi's voice in every gale. Turning round, he thought Zastrozzi's eye glanced over his shoulder.—But even had Bianca taken

the right road, and found Zastrozzi, Verezzi's speed would have mocked pursuit.

He ran several miles, still the dreary extent of the heath was before him: no cottage yet appeared where he might take shelter. He cast himself, for an instant, on the bank of a rivulet, which stole slowly across the heath. The moon-beam played upon its surface—he started at his own reflected image—he thought that voices were wafted on the western gale, and, nerved anew, pursued his course across the plain.

The moon had gained the zenith before Verezzi rested again. Two pine trees, of extraordinary size, stood on a small eminence: he climbed one, and found a convenient seat in its immense branches.

Fatigued, he sank to sleep.

Two hours he lay hushed in oblivion, when he was awakened by a noise. It is but the hooting of the night-raven, thought he.

Day had not yet appeared, but faint streaks in the east presaged the coming morn. Verezzi heard the clattering of hoofs—What was his horror to see that Zastrozzi, Bernardo, and Ugo, were the horsemen! Overcome by terror, he clung to the rugged branch. His persecutors advanced to the spot—they stopped under the tree wherein he was.

"Eternal curses," exclaimed Zastrozzi, "upon Verezzi! I swear never to rest until I find him, and then I will

accomplish the purpose of my soul.—But come, Ugo, Bernardo, let us proceed."

"Signor," said Ugo, "let us the rather stop here to refresh ourselves and our horses. You, perhaps, will not make this pine your couch, but I will get up, for I think I spy an excellent bed above there."

"No, no," answered Zastrozzi; "did not I resolve never to rest until I had found Verezzi? Mount, villain, or die."

Ugo sullenly obeyed. They galloped off, and were quickly out of sight.

Verezzi returned thanks to Heaven for his escape; for he thought that Ugo's eye, as the villain pointed to the branch where he reposed, met his.

It was now morning. Verezzi surveyed the heath, and thought he saw buildings at a distance. Could he gain a town or city, he might defy Zastrozzi's power.

He descended the pine-tree, and advanced as quickly as he could towards the distant buildings. He proceeded across the heath for half an hour, and perceived that, at last, he had arrived at its termination.

The country assumed a new aspect, and the number of cottages and villas showed him that he was in the neighbourhood of some city. A large road which he now entered confirmed his opinion. He saw two peasants, and

asked them where the road led.—"To Passau," was the answer.

It was yet very early in the morning, when he walked through the principal street of Passau. He felt very faint with his recent and unusual exertions; and, overcome by languor, sank on some lofty stone steps, which led to a magnificent mansion, and resting his head on his arm, soon fell asleep.

He had been there nearly an hour, when he was awakened by an old woman. She had a basket on her arm, in which were flowers, which it was her custom to bring to Passau every market-day. Hardly knowing where he was, he answered the old woman's inquiries in a vague and unsatisfactory manner. By degrees, however, they became better acquainted; and as Verezzi had no money, nor any means of procuring it, he accepted of an offer which Claudine (for that was the old woman's name) made him, to work for her, and share her cottage, which, together with a little garden, was all she could call her own. Claudine quickly disposed of her flowers, and accompanied by Verezzi, soon arrived at a little cottage near Passau. It was situated on a pleasant and cultivated spot; at the foot of a small eminence, on which it was situated, flowed the majestic Danube, and on the opposite side was a forest belonging to the Baron of Schwepper, whose vassal Claudine was.

Her little cottage was kept extremely neat; and, by the charity of the Baron, wanted none of those little comforts which old age requires.

Verezzi thought that, in so retired a spot, he might at least pass his time tranquilly, and elude Zastrozzi.

"What induced you," said he to Claudine, as in the evening they sat before the cottage-door, "what induced you to make that offer this morning to me?"

"Ah!" said the old woman, "it was but last week that I lost my dear son, who was every thing to me: he died by a fever which he caught by his too great exertions in obtaining a livelihood for me; and I came to the market yesterday, for the first time since my son's death, hoping to find some peasant who would fill his place, when chance threw you in my way.

"I had hoped that he would have outlived me, as I am quickly hastening to the grave, to which I look forward as to the coming of a friend, who would relieve me from those cares which, alas! but increase with my years."

Verezzi's heart was touched with compassion for the forlorn situation of Claudine. He tenderly told her that he would not forsake her; but if any opportunity occurred for ameliorating her situation, she should no longer continue in poverty.

CHAPTER IV.

But let us return to Zastrozzi.—He had walked with Ugo on the heath, and had returned late. He was surprised to see no light in the cottage. He advanced to the door—he rapped violently—no one answered. "Very strange!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he burst open the door with his foot. He entered the cottage—no one was there: he searched it, and at last saw Bernardo lying, seemingly lifeless, at the foot of the staircase. Zastrozzi advanced to him, and lifted him from the ground: he had been but in a trance, and immediately recovered.

As soon as his astonishment was dissipated, he told Zastrozzi what had happened.

"What!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, interrupting him, "Verezzi escaped! Hell and furies! Villain, you deserve instant death; but thy life is at present necessary to me. Arise, go instantly to Rosenheim, and bring three of my horses from the inn there—make haste! begone!"

Bernardo trembling arose, and obeying Zastrozzi's

commands, crossed the heath quickly towards Rosenheim, a village about half a league distant on the north.

Whilst he was gone, Zastrozzi, agitated by contending passions, knew scarcely what to do. With hurried strides he paced the cottage. He sometimes spoke lowly to himself. The feelings of his soul flashed from his eyes —his frown was terrible.

"Would I had his heart reeking on my dagger, Signor!" said Ugo. "Kill him when you catch him, which you soon will, I am sure."

"Ugo," said Zastrozzi, "you are my friend; you advise me well.—But, no! he must not die.—Ah! by what horrible fetters am I chained—fool that I was—Ugo! he shall die—die by the most hellish torments. I give myself up to fate:—I will taste revenge; for revenge is sweeter than life: and even were I to die with him, and, as the punishment of my crime, be instantly plunged into eternal torments, I should taste superior joy in recollecting the sweet moment of his destruction. O! would that destruction could be eternal!"

The clattering of hoofs was heard, and Zastrozzi was now interrupted by the arrival of Bernardo—they instantly mounted, and the high-spirited steeds bore them swiftly across the heath.

Rapidly, for some time, were Zastrozzi and his companions borne across the plain. They took the same

road as Verezzi had. They passed the pines where he reposed. They hurried on.

The fainting horses were scarce able to bear their guilty burthens. No one had spoken since they had left the clustered pines.

Bernardo's horse, overcome by excessive fatigue, sank on the ground; that of Zastrozzi scarce appeared in better condition.—They stopped.

"What!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, "must we give up the search! Ah! I am afraid we must; our horses can proceed no farther—curse on the horses.

"But let us proceed on foot—Verezzi shall not escape me—nothing shall now retard the completion of my just revenge."

As he thus spoke, Zastrozzi's eye gleamed with impatient revenge; and, with rapid steps, he advanced towards the south of the heath.

Day-light at length appeared; still were the villain's efforts to find Verezzi inefficient. Hunger, thirst, and fatigue, conspired to make them relinquish the pursuit—they lay at intervals upon the stony soil.

"This is but an uncomfortable couch, Signor," muttered Ugo.

Zastrozzi, whose whole thoughts were centred in revenge, heeded him not, but nerved anew by impatient vengeance, he started from the bosom of the earth, and

muttering curses upon the innocent object of his hatred, proceeded onwards. The day passed as had the morning and preceding night. Their hunger was scantily allayed by the wild berries which grew amid the heathy shrubs; and their thirst but increased by the brackish pools of water which alone they met with. They perceived a wood at some distance. "That is a likely place for Verezzi to have retired to, for the day is hot, and he must want repose as well as ourselves," said Bernardo. "True," replied Zastrozzi, as he advanced towards it. They quickly arrived at its borders: it was not a wood, but an immense forest, which stretched southward as far as Schauffhausen. They advanced into it.

The tall trees rising above their heads warded off the meridian sun; the mossy banks beneath invited repose: but Zastrozzi, little recking a scene so fair, hastily scrutinised every recess which might afford an asylum to Verezzi.

Useless were all his researches—fruitless his endeavours: still, however, though faint with hunger, and weary with exertion, he nearly sank upon the turf. His mind was superior to corporeal toil; for *that*, nerved by revenge, was indefatigable.

Ugo and Bernardo, overcome by the extreme fatigue which they had undergone, and strong as the assassins were, fell fainting on the earth.

The sun began to decline; at last it sank beneath the western mountain, and the forest-tops were tinged

by its departing ray. The shades of night rapidly thickened.

Zastrozzi sat awhile upon the decayed trunk of a scathed oak.

The sky was serene; the blue ether was spangled with countless myriads of stars: the tops of the lofty forest-trees waved mournfully in the evening wind; and the moon-beam penetrating at intervals, as they moved, through the matted branches, threw dubious shades upon the dark underwood beneath.

Ugo and Bernardo, conquered by irresistible torpor, sank to rest upon the dewy turf.

A scene so fair—a scene so congenial to those who can reflect upon their past lives with pleasure, and anticipate the future with the enthusiasm of innocence, ill accorded with the ferocious soul of Zastrozzi, which at one time agitated by revenge, at another by agonising remorse, or contending passions, could derive no pleasure from the past—anticipate no happiness in futurity.

Zastrozzi sat for some time immersed in heart-rending contemplations; but though conscience for a while reflected his past life in images of horror, again was his heart steeled by fiercest vengeance; and, aroused by images of insatiate revenge, he hastily arose, and, waking Ugo and Bernardo, pursued his course.

The night was calm and serene—not a cloud obscured the azure brilliancy of the spangled concave above

—not a wind ruffled the tranquillity of the atmosphere below.

Zastrozzi, Ugo, and Bernardo, advanced into the forest. They had tasted no food, save the wild berries of the wood, for some time, and were anxious to arrive at some cottage, where they might procure refreshments. For some time the deep silence which reigned was uninterrupted.

"What is that?" exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he beheld a large and magnificent building, whose battlements rose above the lofty trees. It was built in the Gothic style of architecture, and appeared to be inhabited.

The building reared its pointed casements loftily to the sky; their treillaged ornaments were silvered by the clear moon-light, to which the dark shades of the arches beneath formed a striking contrast. A large portico jutted out: they advanced towards it, and Zastrozzi attempted to open the door.

An open window on one side of the casement arrested Zastrozzi's attention. "Let us enter that," said he.—They entered. It was a large saloon, with many windows. Every thing within was arranged with princely magnificence.—Four ancient and immense sofas in the apartment invited repose.

Near one of the windows stood a table, with an escritoire [1] on it; a paper lay on the ground near it.

[1] In the original edition *escrutoire*.

Zastrozzi, as he passed, heedlessly took up the paper. He advanced nearer to the window, thinking his senses had deceived him when he read, "La Contessa di Laurentini;" but they had not done so, for La Contessa di Laurentini still continued on the paper. He hastily opened it; and the letter, though of no importance, convinced him that this must have been the place to which Matilda said that she had removed.

Ugo and Bernardo lay sleeping on the sofas. Zastrozzi, leaving them as they were, opened an opposite door—it led into a vaulted hall—a large flight of stairs rose from the opposite side—he ascended them—He advanced along a lengthened corridor—a female in white robes stood at the other end—a lamp burnt near her on the balustrade. She was in a reclining attitude, and had not observed his approach. Zastrozzi recognised her for Matilda. He approached her, and beholding Zastrozzi before her, she started back with surprise. For a while she gazed on him in silence, and at last exclaimed, "Zastrozzi! ah! are we revenged on Julia? am I happy? Answer me quickly. Well by your silence do I perceive that our plans have been put into execution. Excellent Zastrozzi! accept my most fervent thanks, my eternal gratitude."

"Matilda!" returned Zastrozzi, "would I could say that we were happy! but, alas! it is but misery and disappointment that causes this my so unexpected visit. I know nothing of the Marchesa di Strobazzo—less of Verezzi. I fear that I must wait till age has unstrung my now so fervent energies; and when time has damped your passion, perhaps you may gain Verezzi's love. Julia

is returned to Italy—is even now in Naples ; and, secure in the immensity of her possessions, laughs at our trifling vengeance. But it shall not be always thus," continued Zastrozzi, his eyes sparkling with inexpressible brilliancy ; " I will accomplish my purpose ; and, Matilda, thine shall likewise be effected. But, come, I have not tasted food for these two days."

" Oh ! supper is prepared below," said Matilda. Seated at the supper-table, the conversation, enlivened by wine, took an animated turn. After some subjects, irrelevant to this history, being discussed, Matilda said, " Ha ! but I forgot to tell you, that I have done some good : I have secured that diabolical Paulo, Julia's servant, who was of great service to her, and, by penetrating our schemes, might have even discomfited our grand design. I have lodged him in the lowest cavern of those dungeons which are under this building—will you go and see him ?" Zastrozzi answered in the affirmative, and seizing a lamp which burnt in a recess of the apartment, followed Matilda.

The rays of the lamp but partially dissipated the darkness as they advanced through the antiquated passages. They arrived at a door : Matilda opened it, and they quickly crossed a grass-grown court-yard.

The grass which grew on the lofty battlements waved mournfully in the rising blast, as Matilda and Zastrozzi entered a dark and narrow casement.—Cautiously they descended the slippery and precipitous steps. The lamp, obscured by the vapours, burnt dimly as they advanced. They arrived at the foot of the staircase. " Zastrozzi !"

exclaimed Matilda. Zastrozzi turned quickly, and, perceiving a door, obeyed Matilda's directions.

On some straw, chained to the wall, lay Paulo.

"O pity! stranger, pity!" exclaimed the miserable Paulo.

No answer, save a smile of most expressive scorn, was given by Zastrozzi. They again ascended the narrow staircase, and, passing the court-yard, arrived at the supper-room.

"But," said Zastrozzi, again taking his seat, "what use is that fellow Paulo in the dungeon? why do you keep him there?"

"Oh!" answered Matilda, "I know not; but if you wish"—

She paused, but her eye expressively filled up the sentence.

Zastrozzi poured out an overflowing goblet of wine. He summoned Ugo and Bernardo—"Take that," said Matilda, presenting them a key—One of the villains took it, and in a few moments returned with the hapless Paulo.

"Paulo!" exclaimed Zastrozzi loudly, "I have prevailed on La Contessa to restore your freedom: here," added he, "take this; I pledge to your future happiness."

Paulo bowed low—he drank the poisoned potion to the dregs, and, overcome by sudden and irresistible faintness, fell at Zastrozzi's feet. Sudden convulsions shook his frame, his lips trembled, his eyes rolled horribly, and, uttering an agonised and lengthened groan, he expired.

"Ugo! Bernardo! take that body and bury it immediately," cried Zastrozzi. "There, Matilda, by such means must Julia die: you see, that the poisons which I possess are quick in their effect."

A pause ensued, during which the eyes of Zastrozzi and Matilda spoke volumes to each guilty soul.

The silence was interrupted by Matilda. Not shocked at the dreadful outrage which had been committed, she told Zastrozzi to come out into the forest, for that she had something for his private ear.

"Matilda," said Zastrozzi, as they advanced along the forest, "I must not stay here, and waste moments in inactivity, which might be more usefully employed: I must quit you to-morrow—I must destroy Julia."

"Zastrozzi," returned Matilda, "I am so far from wishing you to spend your time here in ignoble listlessness, that I will myself join your search. You shall to Italy—to Naples—watch Julia's every movement attend her every step, and in the guise of a friend destroy her: but beware, whilst you assume the softness of the dove, to forget not the cunning of the serpent. On you I depend for destroying her, my own exertions shall find

Verezzi; I myself will gain his love—Julia must die, and expiate the crime of daring to rival me, with her hated blood."

Whilst thus they conversed, whilst they planned these horrid schemes of destruction, the night wore away.

The moon-beam darting her oblique rays from under volumes of louring vapour, threatened an approaching storm. The lurid sky was tinged with a yellowish lustre —the forest-tops rustled in the rising tempest—big drops fell—a flash of lightning, and, instantly after, a peal of bursting thunder, struck with sudden terror the bosom of Matilda. She, however, immediately overcame it, and regarding the battling element with indifference, continued her discourse with Zastrozzi.

They wore out the night in many visionary plans for the future, and now and then a gleam of remorse assailed Matilda's heart. Heedless of the storm, they had remained in the forest late. Flushed with wickedness, they at last sought their respective couches, but sleep forsook their pillow.

In all the luxuriance of extravagant fancy, Matilda portrayed the symmetrical form, the expressive countenance, of Verezzi; whilst Zastrozzi, who played a double part, anticipated, with ferocious exultation, the torments which he she loved was eventually fated to endure, and changed his plan, for a sublimer mode of vengeance was opened to his view.

Matilda passed a night of restlessness and agitation:

her mind was harassed by contending passions, and her whole soul wound up to deeds of horror and wickedness. Zastrozzi's countenance, as she met him in the breakfast-parlour, wore a settled expression of determined revenge —"I almost shudder," exclaimed Matilda, "at the sea of wickedness on which I am about to embark! But still, Verezzi—ah! for him would I even lose my hopes of eternal happiness. In the sweet idea of calling him mine, no scrupulous delicacy, no mistaken superstitious fear, shall prevent me from deserving him by daring acts—No! I am resolved," continued Matilda, as, recollecting his graceful form, her soul was assailed by tenfold love—

"And I am likewise resolved," said Zastrozzi; "I am resolved on revenge—my revenge shall be gratified. Julia shall die, and Verezzi—"

Zastrozzi paused; his eye gleamed with a peculiar expression, and Matilda thought he meant more than he had said—she raised her eyes—they encountered his.

The guilt-bronzed cheek of Zastrozzi was tinged with a momentary blush, but it quickly passed away, and his countenance recovered its wonted firm and determined expression.

"Zastrozzi!" exclaimed Matilda,—"should you be false—should you seek to deceive me—But, no, it is impossible.—Pardon, my friend—I meant not what I said—my thoughts are crazed—"

"'Tis well," said Zastrozzi, haughtily.

"But you forgive my momentary, unmeaning doubt?" said Matilda, and fixed her unmeaning[1] eyes on his countenance.

"It is not for us to dwell on vain, unmeaning expressions, which the soul dictates not," returned Zastrozzi; "and I sue for pardon from you, for having, by ambiguous expressions, caused the least agitation: but, believe me, Matilda, we will not forsake each other; your cause is mine; distrust between us is foolish.—But, farewell for the present; I must order Bernardo to go to Passau, to purchase horses."

The day passed on; each waited with impatience for the arrival of Bernardo.—"Farewell, Matilda," exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he mounted the horses[2] which Bernardo brought; and, taking the route of Italy, galloped off.

[1] Probably a misprint for *meaning*, arising from the use of the word *unmeaning* immediately before and immediately afterwards.

[2] The original edition really represents the hero as performing this feat: no qualifying words have been here omitted.

CHAPTER V.

HER whole soul wrapped up in one idea, the guilty Matilda threw herself into a chariot which waited at the door, and ordered the equipage to proceed towards Passau.

Left to indulge reflection in solitude, her mind recurred to the object nearest her heart—to Verezzi.

Her bosom was scorched by an ardent and unquenchable fire; and while she thought of him, she even shuddered at the intenseness of her own sensations.

"He shall love me—he shall be mine—mine for ever," mentally ejaculated Matilda.

The streets of Passau echoed to La Contessa di Laurentini's equipage, before, roused from her reverie, she found herself at the place of her destination; and she was seated in her hotel in that city, before she had well arranged her unsettled ideas. She summoned Ferdinand, a trusty servant, to whom she confided every thing.—"Ferdinand," said she, "you have many claims on my

gratitude: I have never had cause to reproach you with infidelity in executing my purposes—add another debt to that which I already owe you: find Il Conte Verezzi within three days, and you are my best friend." Ferdinand bowed, and prepared to execute her commands. Two days passed, during which Matilda failed not to make every personal inquiry, even in the suburbs of Passau.

Alternately depressed by fear, and revived by hope, for three days was Matilda's mind in a state of disturbance and fluctuation. The evening of the third day, of the day on which Ferdinand was to return, arrived. Matilda's mind, wound up to the extreme of impatience, was the scene of conflicting passions.—She paced the room rapidly.

A servant entered, and announced supper.

"Is Ferdinand returned?" hastily inquired Matilda.

The domestic answered in the negative.—She sighed deeply, and struck her forehead.

Footsteps were heard in the antichamber without.

"There is Ferdinand!" exclaimed Matilda, exultingly, as he entered—"Well, well! have you found Verezzi? Ah! speak quickly! ease me of this horrible suspense."

"Signora!" said Ferdinand, "it grieves me much to be obliged to declare, that all my endeavours have been inefficient to find Il Conte Verezzi—"

"Oh, madness! madness!" exclaimed Matilda; "is it for this that I have plunged into the dark abyss of crime?—is it for this that I have despised the delicacy of my sex, and, braving consequences, have offered my love to one who despises me—who shuns me, as does the barbarous Verezzi? But if he is in Passau—if he is in the environs of the city, I will find him."

Thus saying, despising the remonstrances of her domestics, casting off all sense of decorum, she rushed into the streets of Passau. A gloomy silence reigned through the streets of the city; it was past midnight, and every inhabitant seemed to be sunk in sleep—sleep which Matilda was almost a stranger to. Her white robes floated on the night air—her shadowy and dishevelled hair flew over her form, which, as she passed the bridge, seemed to strike the boatmen below with the idea of some supernatural and ethereal form.

She hastily crossed the bridge—she entered the fields on the right—the Danube, whose placid stream was scarcely agitated by the wind, reflected her symmetrical form, as, scarcely knowing what direction she pursued, Matilda hastened along its banks. Sudden horror, resistless despair, seized her brain, maddened as it was by hopeless love.

"What have I to do in this world, my fairest prospect blighted, my fondest hope rendered futile?" exclaimed the frantic Matilda, as, wound up to the highest pitch of desperation, she attempted to plunge herself into the river.

But life fled; for Matilda, caught by a stranger's arm, was prevented from the desperate act.

Overcome by horror, she fainted.

Some time did she lie in a state of torpid insensibility, till the stranger, filling his cap with water from the river, and sprinkling her pallid countenance with it, recalled to life the miserable Matilda.

What was her surprise, what was her mingled emotion of rapture and doubt, when the moon-beam disclosed to her view the countenance of Verezzi, as in anxious solicitude he bent over her elegantly-proportioned form!

"By what chance," exclaimed the surprised Verezzi, "do I see here La Contessa di Laurentini? did not I leave you at your Italian castella? I had hoped you would have ceased to persecute me, when I told you that I was irrevocably another's."

"Oh, Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, casting herself at his feet, "I adore you to madness—I love you to distraction. If you have one spark of compassion, let me not sue in vain—reject not one who feels it impossible to overcome the fatal, resistless passion which consumes her."

"Rise, Signora," returned Verezzi—"rise; this discourse is improper—it is not suiting the dignity of your rank, or the delicacy of your sex: but suffer me to

conduct you to yon cottage, where, perhaps, you may deign to refresh yourself, or pass the night."

The moon-beams played upon the tranquil waters of the Danube, as Verezzi silently conducted the beautiful Matilda to the humble dwelling where he resided.

Claudine waited at the door, and had begun to fear that some mischance had befallen Verezzi, as, when he arrived at the cottage-door, it was long past his usual hour of return.

It was his custom, during those hours when the twilight of evening cools the air, to wander through the adjacent rich scenery, though he seldom prolonged his walks till midnight.

He supported the fainting form of Matilda as he advanced towards Claudine. The old woman's eyes had lately failed her, from extreme age; and it was not until Verezzi called to her that she saw him, accompanied by La Contessa di Laurentini.

"Claudine," said Verezzi, "I have another claim upon your kindness: this lady, who has wandered beyond her knowledge, will honour our cottage so far as to pass the night here. If you would prepare the pallet which I usually occupy for her, I will repose this evening on the turf, and will now get supper ready. Signora," continued he, addressing Matilda, "some wine would, I think, refresh your spirits; permit me to fill you a glass of wine."

Matilda silently accepted his offer—their eyes met—those of Matilda were sparkling and full of meaning.

"Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, "I arrived but four days since at Passau—I have eagerly inquired for you—oh! how eagerly!—Will you accompany me to-morrow to Passau?"

"Yes," said Verezzi, hesitatingly.

Claudine soon joined them. Matilda exulted in the success of her schemes, and Claudine being present, the conversation took a general turn. The lateness of the hour, at last, warned them to separate.

Verezzi, left to solitude and his own reflections, threw himself on the turf, which extended to the Danube below.—Ideas of the most gloomy nature took possession of his soul; and, in the event of the evening, he saw the foundation of the most bitter misfortunes.

He could not love Matilda; and though he never had seen her but in the most amiable light, he found it impossible to feel any sentiment towards her, save cold esteem. Never had he beheld those dark shades in her character, which, if developed, could excite nothing but horror and detestation: he regarded her as a woman of strong passions, who, having resisted them to the utmost of her power, was at last borne away in the current—whose brilliant virtues one fault had obscured—as such he pitied her: but still could he not help observing a comparison between her and Julia, whose feminine

delicacy shrunk from the slightest suspicion, even of indecorum. · Her fragile form, her mild heavenly countenance, was contrasted with all the partiality of love, to the scintillating eye, the commanding countenance, the bold expressive gaze, of Matilda.

He must accompany her on the morrow to Passau.—During their walk, he determined to observe a strict silence; or, at all events, not to hazard one equivocal expression, which might be construed into what it was not meant for.

The night passed away—morning came, and the tops of the far-seen mountains were gilded by the rising sun.

Exulting in the success of her schemes, and scarcely able to disguise the vivid feelings of her heart, the wily Matilda, as early she descended to the narrow parlour, where Claudine had prepared a simple breakfast, affected a gloom she was far from feeling.

An unequivocal expression of innocent and mild tenderness marked her manner towards Verezzi: her eyes were cast on the ground, and her every movement spoke meekness and sensibility.

At last, breakfast being finished, the time arrived when Matilda, accompanied by Verezzi, pursued the course of the river, to retrace her footsteps to Passau. A gloomy silence for some time prevailed—at last Matilda spoke.

"Unkind Verezzi! is it thus that you will ever slight me? is it for this that I have laid aside the delicacy of my sex, and owned to you a passion which was but too violent to be concealed?—Ah! at least pity me! I love you: oh! I adore you to madness!"

She paused—the peculiar expression which beamed in her dark eye, told the tumultuous wishes of her bosom.

"Distress not yourself and me, Signora," said Verezzi, "by these unavailing protestations. Is it for you—is it for Matilda," continued he, his countenance assuming a smile of bitterest scorn, "to talk of love to the lover of Julia?"

Rapid tears coursed down Matilda's cheek. She sighed—the sigh seemed to rend her inmost bosom.

So unexpected a reply conquered Verezzi. He had been prepared for reproaches, but his feelings could not withstand Matilda's tears.

"Ah! forgive me, Signora," exclaimed Verezzi, "if my brain, crazed by disappointments, dictated words which my heart intended not."

"Oh!" replied Matilda, "it is I who am wrong: led on by the violence of my passion, I have uttered words, the bare recollection of which fills me with horror. Oh! forgive, forgive an unhappy woman, whose only fault is loving you too well."

As thus she spoke, they entered the crowded streets of Passau, and, proceeding rapidly onwards, soon arrived at La Contessa di Laurentini's hotel.

CHAPTER VI.

THE character of Matilda has been already so far revealed, as to render it unnecessary to expatiate upon it farther. Suffice it to say, that her syren illusions, and well-timed blandishments, obtained so great a power over the imagination of Verezzi, that his resolution to return to Claudine's cottage before sun-set became every instant fainter and fainter.

"And will you thus leave me?" exclaimed Matilda, in accents of the bitterest anguish, as Verezzi prepared to depart—"will you thus leave unnoticed, her who, for your sake alone, casting aside the pride of high birth, has wandered, unknown, through foreign climes? Oh! if I have (led away by love for you) outstepped the bounds of modesty, let me not, oh! let me not be injured by others with impunity. Stay, I entreat thee, Verezzi, if yet one spark of compassion lingers in your breast—stay and defend me from those who vainly seek one who is irrevocably thine."

With words such as these did the wily Matilda work upon the generous passions of Verezzi. Emotions of

pity, of compassion, for one whose only fault he supposed to be love for him, conquered Verezzi's softened soul.

"Oh! Matilda," said he, "though I cannot love thee —though my soul is irrevocably another's—yet, believe me, I esteem, I admire thee; and it grieves me that a heart, fraught with so many and so brilliant virtues, has fixed itself on one who is incapable of appreciating its value."[1]

The time passed away, and each returning sun beheld Verezzi still at Passau—still under Matilda's roof. That softness, that melting tenderness, which she knew so well how to assume, began to convince Verezzi of the injustice of the involuntary hatred which had filled his soul towards her. Her conversation was fraught with sense and elegant ideas. She played to him in the cool of the evening; and often, after sun-set, they rambled together into the rich scenery and luxuriant meadows which are washed by the Danube.

Claudine was not forgotten: indeed, Matilda first recollected her, and, by placing her in an independent situation, added a new claim to the gratitude of Verezzi.

In this manner three weeks passed away. Every day did Matilda practise new arts, employ new blandishments, to detain under her roof the fascinated Verezzi.

The most select parties in Passau, flitted in varied movements to exquisite harmony, when Matilda perceived Verezzi's spirits to be ruffled by recollection.

[1] Quotation mark wanting in the original.

When he seemed to prefer solitude, a moonlight walk by the Danube was proposed by Matilda; or, with skilful fingers, she drew from her harp sounds of the most heart-touching, most enchanting melody. Her behaviour towards him was soft, tender, and quiet, and might rather have characterised the mild, serene love of a friend or sister, than the ardent, unquenchable fire, which burnt, though concealed, within Matilda's bosom.

It was one calm evening that Matilda and Verezzi sat in a back saloon, which overlooked the gliding Danube. Verezzi was listening, with all the enthusiasm of silent rapture, to a favourite soft air which Matilda sang, when a loud rap at the hall door startled them. A domestic entered, and told Matilda that a stranger, on particular business, waited to speak with her.

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, "I cannot attend to him now; bid him wait."

The stranger was impatient, and would not be denied.

"Desire him to come in, then," said Matilda.

The domestic hastened to obey her commands.

Verezzi had arisen to leave the room. "No," cried Matilda, "sit still; I shall soon dismiss the fellow; besides, I have no secrets from you." Verezzi took his seat.

The wide folding-doors which led into the passage were open.

Verezzi observed Matilda, as she gazed fixedly through them, to grow pale.

He could not see the cause, as he was seated on a sofa at the other end of the saloon.

Suddenly she started from her seat—her whole frame seemed convulsed by agitation, as she rushed through the door.

Verezzi heard an agitated voice exclaim, "Go! go! to-morrow morning!"

Matilda returned—she seated herself again at the harp which she had quitted, and essayed to compose herself; but it was in vain—she was too much agitated.

Her voice, as she again attempted to sing, refused to perform its office; and her humid hands, as they swept the strings of the harp, violently trembled.

"Matilda," said Verezzi, in a sympathising tone, "what has agitated you? Make me a repository of your sorrows: I would, if possible, alleviate them."

"Oh no," said Matilda, affecting unconcern; "nothing —nothing has happened. I was even myself unconscious that I appeared agitated."

Verezzi affected to believe her, and assumed a composure which he felt not. The conversation changed, and Matilda assumed her wonted mien. The lateness of the hour at last warned them to separate.

The more Verezzi thought upon the evening's occurrence, the more did a conviction in his mind, inexplicable even to himself, strengthen, that Matilda's agitation originated in something of consequence. He knew her mind to be superior to common circumstance and fortuitous casualty, which might have ruffled an inferior soul. Besides, the words which he had heard her utter —"Go! go! to-morrow morning!"—and though he resolved to disguise his real sentiments, and seem to let the subject drop, he determined narrowly to scrutinise Matilda's conduct; and, particularly, to know what took place on the following morning.—An indefinable presentiment that something horrible was about to occur, filled Verezzi's mind. A long chain of retrospection ensued—he could not forget the happy hours which he had passed with Julia; her interesting softness, her ethereal form, pressed on his aching sense.

Still did he feel his soul irresistibly softened towards Matilda—her love for him flattered his vanity; and though he could not feel reciprocal affection towards her, yet her kindness in rescuing him from his former degraded situation, her altered manner towards him, and her unremitting endeavours to please, to humour him in every thing, called for his warmest, his sincerest gratitude.

The morning came—Verezzi arose from a sleepless couch, and descending into the breakfast-parlour, there found Matilda.

He endeavoured to appear the same as usual, but in

vain; for an expression of reserve and scrutiny was apparent on his features.

Matilda perceived it, and shrunk abashed from his keen gaze.

The meal passed away in silence.

"Excuse me for an hour or two," at last stammered out Matilda—"my steward has accounts to settle;" and she left the apartment.

Verezzi had now no doubt but that the stranger, who had caused Matilda's agitation the day before, was now returned to finish his business.

He moved towards the door to follow her—he stopped.

What right have I to pry into the secrets of another? thought Verezzi: besides, the business which this stranger has with Matilda cannot possibly concern me.

Still was he compelled, by an irresistible fascination, as it were, to unravel what appeared to him so mysterious an affair. He endeavoured to believe it to be as she affirmed; he endeavoured to compose himself: he took a book, but his eyes wandered insensibly.

Thrice he hesitated—thrice he shut the door of the apartment; till at last, a curiosity, unaccountable even to himself, propelled him to seek Matilda.

Mechanically he moved along the passage. He met one of the domestics—he inquired where Matilda was.

"In the grand saloon," was the reply.

With trembling steps he advanced towards it—The folding-doors were open—He saw Matilda and the stranger standing at the remote end of the apartment.

The stranger's figure, which was towering and majestic, was rendered more peculiarly striking, by the elegantly proportioned form of Matilda, who leant on a marble table near her; and her gestures, as she conversed with him, manifested the most eager impatience, the deepest interest.

At so great a distance, Verezzi could not hear their conversation; but, by the low murmurs which occasionally reached his ear, he perceived that, whatever it might be, they were both equally interested in the subject.

For some time he contemplated them with mingled surprise and curiosity—he tried to arrange the confused murmurs of their voices, which floated along the immense and vaulted apartment, but no articulate sound reached his ear.

At last Matilda took the stranger's hand: she pressed it to her lips with an eager and impassioned gesture, and led him to the opposite door of the saloon.

Suddenly the stranger turned, but as quickly regained

his former position, as he retreated through the door; not quickly enough, however, but, in the stranger's fire-darting eye, Verezzi recognised him who had declared eternal enmity at the cottage on the heath.

Scarcely knowing where he was, or what to believe, for a few moments Verezzi stood bewildered, and unable to arrange the confusion of ideas which floated in his brain, and assailed his terror-struck imagination. He knew not what to believe—what phantom it could be that, in the shape of Zastrozzi, blasted his straining eye-balls —Could it really be Zastrozzi? Could his most rancorous, his bitterest enemy, be thus beloved, thus confided in, by the perfidious Matilda?

For several moments he stood doubting what he should resolve upon. At one while he determined to reproach Matilda with treachery and baseness, and overwhelm her in the mid career of wickedness; but at last concluding it to be more politic to dissemble and subdue his emotions, he went into the breakfast-parlour which he had left, and seated himself as if nothing had happened, at a drawing which he had left incomplete.

Besides, perhaps Matilda might not be guilty—perhaps she was deceived; and though some scheme of villany and destruction to himself was preparing, she might be the dupe, and not the coadjutor, of Zastrozzi. The idea that she was innocent soothed him; for he was anxious to make up, in his own mind, for the injustice which he had been guilty of towards her: and though he could not conquer the disgusting ideas, the unaccountable detestations, which often, in spite of himself, filled

his soul towards her, he was willing to overcome what he considered but as an illusion of the imagination, and to pay that just tribute of esteem to her virtues which they demanded.

Whilst these ideas, although confused and unconnected, passed in Verezzi's brain, Matilda again entered the apartment.

Her countenance exhibited the strongest marks of agitation, and full of inexpressible and confused meaning was her dark eye, as she addressed some trifling question to Verezzi, in a hurried accent, and threw herself into a chair beside him.

"Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, after a pause equally painful to both—"Verezzi! I am deeply grieved to be the messenger of bad news—willingly would I withhold the fatal truth from you; yet, by some other means, it may meet your unprepared ear. I have something dreadful, shocking, to relate: can you bear the recital?"

The nerveless fingers of Verezzi dropped the pencil—he seized Matilda's hand, and, in accents almost inarticulate from terror, conjured her to explain her horrid surmises.

"Oh! my friend! my sister!" exclaimed Matilda, as well-feigned tears coursed down her cheeks,—"oh! she is——"

"What! what!" interrupted Verezzi, as the idea of something having befallen his adored Julia filled his

maddened brain with tenfold horror: for often had Matilda declared, that since she could not become his wife, she would willingly be his friend, and had even called Julia her sister.

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, hiding her face in her hands, "Julia—Julia—whom you love, is dead."

Unable to withhold his fleeting faculties from a sudden and chilly horror which seized them, Verezzi sank forward, and, fainting, fell at Matilda's feet.

In vain, for some time, was every effort to recover him. Every restorative which was administered, for a long time, was unavailing: at last his lips unclosed—he seemed to take his breath easier—he moved—he slowly opened his eyes.

CHAPTER VIII.[1]

His head reposed upon Matilda's bosom; he started from it violently, as if stung by a scorpion, and fell upon the floor. His eyes rolled horribly, and seemed as if starting from their sockets.

"Is she then dead? is Julia dead?" in accents scarcely articulate exclaimed Verezzi. "Ah, Matilda! was it you then who destroyed her? was it by thy jealous hand that she sank to an untimely grave?—Ah, Matilda! Matilda! say that she yet lives! Alas! what have I to do in this world without Julia?—an empty uninteresting void!"

Every word uttered by the hapless Verezzi spoke daggers to the agitated Matilda.

Again overpowered by the acuteness of his sensations, he sank on the floor, and, in violent convulsions, he remained bereft of sense.

[1] There is no Chapter VII.

Matilda again raised him—again laid his throbbing head upon her bosom.—Again, as recovering, the wretched Verezzi perceived his situation—overcome by agonising reflection, he relapsed into insensibility.

One fit rapidly followed another, and at last, in a state of the wildest delirium, he was conveyed to bed.

Matilda found, that a too eager impatience had carried her too far. She had prepared herself for violent grief, but not for the paroxysms of madness which now seemed really to have seized the brain of the devoted Verezzi.

She sent for a physician—he arrived, and his opinion of Verezzi's danger almost drove the wretched Matilda to desperation.

Exhausted by contending passions, she threw herself on a sofa: she thought of the deeds which she had perpetrated to gain Verezzi's love; she considered that, should her purpose be defeated, at the very instant which her heated imagination had portrayed as the commencement of her triumph; should all the wickedness, all the crimes, into which she had plunged herself, be of no avail—this idea, more than remorse for her enormities, affected her.

She sat for a time absorbed in a confusion of contending thought: her mind was the scene of anarchy and horror: at last, exhausted by their own violence, a deep, a desperate calm took possession of her faculties. She

started from the sofa, and, maddened by the idea of Verezzi's danger, sought his apartment.

On a bed lay Verezzi.

A thick film overspread his eye, and he seemed sunk in insensibility.

Matilda approached him—she pressed her burning lips to his—she took his hand—it was cold, and at intervals slightly agitated by convulsions.

A deep sigh, at this instant, burst from his lips—a momentary hectic flushed his cheek, as the miserable Verezzi attempted to rise.

Matilda, though almost too much agitated to command her emotions, threw herself into a chair behind the curtain, and prepared to watch his movements.

"Julia! Julia!" exclaimed he, starting from the bed, as his flaming eye-balls were unconsciously fixed upon the agitated Matilda, "where art thou? Ah! thy fair form now moulders in the dark sepulchre! would I were laid beside thee! thou art now an ethereal spirit!" and then, in a seemingly triumphant accent, he added, "But, ere long, I will seek thy unspotted soul—ere long I will again clasp my lost Julia!" Overcome by resistless delirium, he was for an instant silent—his starting eyes seemed to follow some form, which imagination had portrayed in vacuity. He dashed his head against the wall, and sank, overpowered by insensibility, on the floor.

Accustomed as she was to scenes of horror, and firm and dauntless as was Matilda's soul, yet this was too much to behold with composure. She rushed towards him, and lifted him from the floor. In a delirium of terror, she wildly called for help. Unconscious of every thing around her, she feared Verezzi had destroyed himself. She clasped him to her bosom, and called on his name, in an ecstasy of terror.

The domestics, alarmed by her exclamations, rushed in. Once again they lifted the insensible Verezzi into the bed—every spark of life seemed now to have been extinguished; for the transport of horror which had torn his soul was almost too much to be sustained. A physician was again sent for—Matilda, maddened by desperation, in accents almost inarticulate from terror, demanded hope or despair from the physician.

He, who was a man of sense, declared his opinion, that Verezzi would speedily recover, though he knew not the event which might take place in the crisis of the disorder, which now rapidly approached.

The remonstrances of those around her were unavailing, to draw Matilda from the bed-side of Verezzi.

She sat there, a prey to disappointed passion, silent, and watching every turn of the hapless Verezzi's countenance, as, bereft of sense, he lay extended on the bed before her.

The animation which was wont to illumine his sparkling eye was fled: the roseate colour which had tinged

his cheek had given way to an ashy paleness—he was insensible to all around him. Matilda sat there the whole day, and silently administered medicines to the unconscious Verezzi, as occasion required.

Towards night, the physician again came. Matilda's head thoughtfully leant upon her arm as he entered the apartment.

"Ah, what hope? what hope?" wildly she exclaimed.

The physician calmed her, and bid her not despair: then observing her pallid countenance, he said, he believed she required his skill as much as his patient.

"Oh! heed me not," she exclaimed; "but how is Verezzi? will he live or die?"

The physician advanced towards the emaciated Verezzi —he took his hand.

A burning fever raged through his veins.

"Oh, how is he?" exclaimed Matilda, as, anxiously watching the humane physician's countenance, she thought a shade of sorrow spread itself over his features —"but tell me my fate quickly," continued she: "I am prepared to hear the worst—prepared to hear that he is even dead already."

As she spoke this, a sort of desperate serenity overspread her features—she seized the physician's arm, and looked steadfastly on his countenance, and then, as if

overcome by unwonted exertions, she sank fainting at his feet.

The physician raised her, and soon succeeded in recalling her fleeted faculties.

Overcome by its own violence, Matilda's despair became softened, and the words of the physician operated as a balm upon her soul, and bid her feel hope.

She again resumed her seat, and waited with smothered impatience for the event of the decisive crisis, which the physician could now no longer conceal.

She pressed his burning hand in hers, and waited, with apparent composure, for eleven o'clock.

Slowly the hours passed—the clock of Passau tolled each lingering quarter as they rolled away, and hastened towards the appointed time, when the chamber-door of Verezzi was slowly opened by Ferdinand.

"Ha! why do you disturb me now?" exclaimed Matilda, whom the entrance of Ferdinand had roused from a profound reverie.

"Signora!" whispered Ferdinand—"Signor Zastrozzi waits below: he wishes to see you there."

"Ah!" said Matilda thoughtfully, "conduct him here."

Ferdinand departed to obey her—footsteps were heard

in the passage, and immediately afterwards Zastrozzi stood before Matilda.

"Matilda!" exclaimed he, "why do I see you here? what accident has happened which confines you to this chamber?"

"Ah!" replied Matilda, in an under-voice, "look in that bed—behold Verezzi! emaciated and insensible—in a quarter of an hour, perhaps, all animation will be fled—fled for ever!" continued she, as a deeper expression of despair shaded her beautiful features.

Zastrozzi advanced to the foot of the bed—Verezzi lay, as if dead, before his eyes; for the ashy hue of his lips, and his sunken inexpressive eye, almost declared that his spirit was fled.

Zastrozzi gazed upon him with an indefinable expression of insatiated vengeance—indefinable to Matilda, as she gazed upon the expressive countenance of her coadjutor in crime.

"Matilda! I want you; come to the lower saloon; I have something to speak to you of," said Zastrozzi.

"Oh! if it concerned my soul's eternal happiness, I could not now attend," exclaimed Matilda, energetically: "in less than a quarter of an hour, perhaps, all I hold dear on earth will be dead; with him, every hope, every wish, every tie which binds me to earth. Oh!" exclaimed she, her voice assuming a tone of extreme horror, "see how pale he looks!"

Zastrozzi bade Matilda farewell, and went away.

The physician yet continued watching, in silence, the countenance of Verezzi: it still retained its unchanging expression of fixed despair.

Matilda gazed upon it, and waited with the most eager, yet subdued impatience, for the expiration of the few minutes which yet remained—she still gazed.

The features of Verezzi's countenance were slightly convulsed.

The clock struck eleven.

His lips unclosed—Matilda turned pale with terror; yet mute, and absorbed by expectation, remained rooted to her seat.

She raised her eyes, and hope again returned, as she beheld the countenance of the humane physician lighted up with a beam of pleasure.

She could no longer contain herself, but, in an ecstasy of pleasure, as excessive as her grief and horror before had been violent, in rapid and hurried accents questioned the physician. The physician, with an expressive smile, pressed his finger on his lip. She understood the movement; and, though her heart was dilated with sudden and excessive delight, she smothered her joy, as she had before her grief, and gazed with rapturous emotion on the countenance of Verezzi, as, to her expectant eyes, a blush of animation tinged his before-pallid countenance.

Matilda took his hand—the pulses yet beat with feverish violence. She gazed upon his countenance—the film, which before had overspread his eye, disappeared: returning expression pervaded its orbit, but it was the expression of deep, of rooted grief.

The physician made a sign to Matilda to withdraw.

She drew the curtain before her, and, in anxious expectation, awaited the event.

A deep, a long-drawn sigh, at last burst from Verezzi's bosom. He raised himself—his eyes seemed to follow some form, which imagination had portrayed in the remote obscurity of the apartment, for the shades of night were but partially dissipated by a lamp which burnt on a table behind. He raised his almost nerveless arm, and passed it across his eyes, as if to convince himself, that what he saw was not an illusion of the imagination.

He looked at the physician, who sat near to and silent by the bedside, and patiently awaited whatever event might occur.

Verezzi slowly arose, and violently exclaimed, "Julia! Julia! my long-lost Julia, come!" And then, more collectedly, he added, in a mournful tone, "Ah no! you are dead; lost, lost for ever!"

He turned round, and saw the physician, but Matilda was still concealed.

"Where am I?" inquired Verezzi, addressing the physician. "Safe, safe," answered he: "compose yourself; all will be well."

"Ah, but Julia?" inquired Verezzi, with a tone so expressive of despair, as threatened returning delirium.

"Oh! compose yourself," said the humane physician: "you have been very ill: this is but an illusion of the imagination; and even now, I fear, that you labour under that delirium which attends a brain-fever."

Verezzi's nerveless frame again sunk upon the bed—still his eyes were open, and fixed upon vacancy: he seemed to be endeavouring to arrange the confusion of ideas which pressed upon his brain.

Matilda undrew the curtain; but, as her eye met the physician's, his glance told her to place it in its original situation.

As she thought of the events of the day, her heart was dilated by tumultuous, yet pleasurable emotions. She conjectured, that were Verezzi to recover, of which she now entertained but little doubt, she might easily erase from his heart the boyish passion which before had possessed it; might convince him of the folly of supposing that a first attachment is fated to endure for ever; and, by unremitting assiduity in pleasing him—by soft, quiet attentions, and an affected sensibility, might at last acquire the attainment of that object, for which her bosom had so long and so ardently panted.

Soothed by these ideas, and willing to hear from the physician's mouth a more explicit affirmation of Verezzi's safety than his looks had given, Matilda rose, for the first time since his illness, and, unseen by Verezzi, approached the physician.—"Follow me to the saloon," said Matilda.

The physician obeyed, and, by his fervent assurances of Verezzi's safety and speedy recovery, confirmed Matilda's fluctuating hopes. "But," added the physician, "though my patient will recover if his mind be unruffled, I will not answer for his re-establishment should he see you, as his disorder, being wholly on the mind, may be possibly augmented by——"

The physician paused, and left Matilda to finish the sentence; for he was a man of penetration and judgement, and conjectured that some sudden and violent emotion, of which she was the cause, occasioned his patient's illness. This conjecture became certainty, as, when he concluded, he observed Matilda's face change to an ashy paleness.

"May I not watch him—attend him?" inquired Matilda imploringly.

"No," answered the physician: "in the weakened state in which he now is, the sight of you might cause immediate dissolution."

Matilda started, as if overcome by horror, at the bare idea, and promised to obey his commands.

The morning came—Matilda arose from a sleepless couch, and with hopes yet unconfirmed sought Verezzi's apartment.

She stood near the door, listening.—Her heart palpitated with tremulous violence, as she listened to Verezzi's breathing—every sound from within alarmed her. At last she slowly opened the door, and, though adhering to the physician's directions in not suffering Verezzi to see her, she could not deny herself the pleasure of watching him, and busying herself in little offices about his apartment.

She could hear Verezzi question the attendant collectedly, yet as a person who was ignorant where he was, and knew not the events which had immediately preceded his present state.

At last he sank into a deep sleep—Matilda now dared to gaze on him: the hectic colour which had flushed his cheek was fled, but the ashy hue of his lips had given place to a brilliant vermilion—She gazed intently on his countenance.

A heavenly, yet faint smile, diffused itself over his countenance—his hand slightly moved.

Matilda, fearing that he would awake, again concealed herself. She was mistaken; for, on looking again, he still slept.

She still gazed upon his countenance. The visions of his sleep were changed, for tears came fast from

under his eyelids, and a deep sigh burst from his bosom.

Thus passed several days: Matilda still watched, with most affectionate assiduity, by the bedside of the unconscious Verezzi.

The physician declared that his patient's mind was yet in too irritable a state to permit him to see Matilda, but that he was convalescent.

One evening she sat by his bedside, and gazing upon the features of the sleeping Verezzi, felt unusual softness take possession of her soul—an indefinable and tumultuous emotion shook her bosom—her whole frame thrilled with rapturous ecstasy, and seizing the hand, which lay motionless beside her, she imprinted on it a thousand burning kisses.

"Ah, Julia! Julia! is it you?" exclaimed Verezzi, as he raised his enfeebled frame; but perceiving his mistake, as he cast his eyes on Matilda, sank back, and fainted.

Matilda hastened with restoratives, and soon succeeded in recalling to life Verezzi's fleeted faculties.

CHAPTER IX.

Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? would'st thou have that
Which thou esteemest the ornament of life,
Or live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting I *dare not* wait upon *I would*?

MACBETH.

For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

THE soul of Verezzi was filled with irresistible disgust, as, recovering, he found himself in Matilda's arms. His whole frame trembled with chilly horror, and he could scarcely withhold himself from again fainting. He fixed his eyes upon the countenance—they met hers—an ardent fire, mingled with a touching softness, filled their orbits.

In a hurried and almost inarticulate accent, he reproached Matilda with perfidy, baseness, and even murder. The roseate colour which had tinged Matilda's cheek, gave place to an ashy hue—the animation which had sparkled in her eye, yielded to a confused expression of apprehension, as the almost delirious Verezzi uttered accusations he knew not the meaning of; for his brain,

maddened by the idea of Julia's death, was whirled round in an ecstasy of terror.

Matilda seemed to have composed every passion: a forced serenity overspread her features, as, in a sympathising and tender tone, she entreated him to calm his emotions, and giving him a composing medicine, left him.

She descended to the saloon.

"Ah! he yet despises me—he even hates me," ejaculated Matilda. "An irresistible antipathy—irresistible, I fear, as my love for him is ardent, has taken possession of his soul towards me. Ah! miserable, hapless being that I am! doomed to have my fondest hope, my brightest prospect, blighted."

Alive alike to the tortures of despair and the illusions of hope, Matilda, now in an agony of desperation, impatiently paced the saloon.

Her mind was inflamed by a more violent emotion of hate towards Julia, as she recollected Verezzi's fond expressions: she determined, however, that were Verezzi not to be hers, he should never be Julia's.

Whilst thus she thought, Zastrozzi entered.

The conversation was concerning Verezzi.

"How shall I gain his love, Zastrozzi?" exclaimed Matilda. "Oh! I will renew every tender office—I will watch by him day and night, and, by unremitting atten-

tions, I will try to soften his flinty soul. But, alas! it was but now that he started from my arms in horror, and, in accents of desperation, accused me of perfidy—of murder. Could I be perfidious to Verezzi, my heart, which burns with so fervent a fire, declares I could not, and murder—"

Matilda paused.

"Would thou could say thou wert guilty, or even accessary to *that*," exclaimed Zastrozzi, his eye gleaming with disappointed ferocity. "Would Julia of Strobazzo's heart was reeking on my dagger!"

"Fervently do I join in that wish, my best Zastrozzi," returned Matilda: "but, alas! what avail wishes—what avail useless protestations of revenge, whilst Julia yet lives?—yet lives, perhaps, again to obtain Verezzi—to clasp him constant to her bosom—and perhaps—oh, horror! perhaps to———"

Stung to madness by the picture which her fancy had portrayed, Matilda paused.

Her bosom heaved with throbbing palpitations; and, whilst describing the success of her rival, her warring soul shone apparent from her scintillating eyes.

Zastrozzi, meanwhile, stood collected in himself; and scarcely heeding the violence of Matilda, awaited the issue of her speech.

He besought her to calm herself, nor, by those violent

emotions, unfit herself for prosecuting the attainment of her fondest hope.

"Are you firm?" inquired Zastrozzi.

"Yes!"

"Are you resolved? Does fear, amid the other passions, shake your soul?"

"No, no—this heart knows not to fear—this breast knows not to shrink," exclaimed Matilda eagerly.

"Then be cool—be collected," returned Zastrozzi, "and thy purpose is effected."

Though little was in these words which might warrant hope, yet Matilda's susceptible soul, as Zastrozzi spoke, thrilled with anticipated delight.

"My maxim, therefore," said Zastrozzi, "through life has been, wherever I am, whatever passions shake my inmost soul, at least to *appear* collected. I generally am; for, by suffering no common events, no fortuitous casualty to disturb me, my soul becomes steeled to more interesting trials. I have a spirit, ardent, impetuous as thine; but acquaintance with the world has induced me to veil it, though it still continues to burn within my bosom. Believe me, I am far from wishing to persuade you from your purpose—No—any purpose undertaken with ardour, and prosecuted with perseverence, must eventually be crowned with success. Love is worthy of any risque—I felt it once, but revenge has now swallowed up every other feeling of my soul—I am alive to nothing but revenge.

But even did I desire to persuade you from the purpose on which your heart is fixed, I should not say it was wrong to attempt it; for whatever procures pleasure is right, and consonant to the dignity of man, who was created for no other purpose but to obtain happiness; else, why were passions given us? why were those emotions, which agitate my breast, and madden my brain, implanted in us by nature? As for the confused hope of a future state, why should we debar ourselves of the delights of this, even though purchased by what the misguided multitude calls immorality?"[1]

Thus sophistically argued, Zastrozzi.—His soul, deadened by crime, could only entertain confused ideas of immortal happiness; for in proportion as human nature departs from virtue, so far are they also from being able clearly to contemplate the wonderful operations, the mysterious ways of Providence.

Coolly and collectedly argued Zastrozzi: he delivered his sentiments with the air of one who was wholly convinced of the truth of the doctrines he uttered,—a conviction to be dissipated by shunning[2] proof.

Whilst Zastrozzi thus spoke, Matilda remained silent, —she paused. Zastrozzi must have strong powers of reflection; he must be convinced of the truth of his own reasoning, thought Matilda, as eagerly she yet gazed on his countenance.—Its unchanging expression of firmness and conviction still continued.—"Ah!" said Matilda, "Zastrozzi, thy words are a balm to my soul, I never yet knew thy real sentiments on this

[1] The quotation marks are wanting in the original edition.

[2] *Sic;* but perhaps *shunning* is a misprint for *stunning*.

subject; but answer me, do you believe that the soul decays with the body, or if you do not, when this perishable form mingles with its parent earth, where goes the soul which now actuates its movements? perhaps, it wastes its fervent energies in tasteless apathy, or lingering torments."

"Matilda," returned Zastrozzi, "think not so; rather suppose, that by its own innate and energetical exertions, this soul must endure for ever, that no fortuitous occurrences, no incidental events, can affect its happiness; but by daring boldly, by striving to verge from the beaten path, whilst yet trammelled in the chains of mortality, it will gain superior advantages in a future state."

"But religion! Oh Zastrozzi!"—

"I thought thy soul was daring," replied Zastrozzi, "I thought thy mind was towering; and did I then err, in the different estimate I had formed of thy character?—O yield not yourself, Matilda, thus to false, foolish, and vulgar prejudices—for the present, farewell."

Saying this, Zastrozzi departed.

Thus, by an artful appeal to her passions, did Zastrozzi extinguish the faint spark of religion which yet gleamed in Matilda's bosom.

In proportion as her belief of an Omnipotent Power, and consequently her hopes of eternal salvation declined, her ardent and unquenchable passion for Verezzi increased, and a delirium of guilty love, filled her soul.—

"Shall I then call him mine for ever?" mentally inquired Matilda; "will the passion which now consumes me, possess my soul to all eternity? Ah! well I know it will; and when emancipated from this terrestrial form, my soul departs; still its fervent energies unrepressed, will remain; and in the union of soul to soul, it will taste celestial transports." An ecstasy of tumultuous and confused delight rushed through her veins: she stood for some time immersed in thought.—Agitated by the emotions of her soul, her every limb trembled—she thought upon Zastrozzi's sentiments, she almost shuddered as she reflected; yet was convinced, by the cool and collected manner in which he had delivered them.—She thought on his advice, and steeling her soul, repressing every emotion, she now acquired that coolness so necessary to the attainment of her desire.

Thinking of nothing else, alive to no idea but Verezzi, Matilda's countenance assumed a placid serenity—she even calmed her soul, she bid it restrain its emotions, and the passions which so lately had battled fiercely in her bosom, were calmed.

She again went to Verezzi's apartment, but, as she approached, vague fears, lest he should have penetrated her schemes confused her: but his mildly beaming eyes, as she gazed upon them, convinced her, that the horrid expressions which he had before uttered, were merely the effect of temporary delirium.

"Ah, Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, "where have you been?"

Matilda's soul, alive alike to despair and hope, was filled with momentary delight as he addressed her; but bitter hate, and disappointed love, again tortured her bosom, as he exclaimed in accents of heart-felt agony: "Oh! Julia, my long-lost Julia!"

"Matilda," said he, "my friend, farewell; I feel that I am dying, but I feel pleasure,—oh! transporting pleasure, in the idea that I shall soon meet my Julia. Matilda," added he, in a softened accent,[1] "farewell for ever." Scarcely able to contain the emotions which the idea alone of Verezzi's death excited, Matilda, though the crisis of the disorder, she knew, had been favorable, shuddered—bitter hate, even more rancorous than ever, kindled in her bosom against Julia, for to hear Verezzi talk of her with soul-subduing tenderness, but wound up her soul to the highest pitch of uncontrollable vengeance. —Her breast heaved violently, her dark eye, in expressive glances, told the fierce passions of her soul; yet, sensible of the necessity of controlling her emotions, she leaned her head upon her hand, and when she answered Verezzi, a calmness, a melting expression of grief, overspread her features. She conjured him in the most tender, the most soothing terms, to compose himself, and, though Julia was gone for ever, to remember that there was yet one in the world, one tender friend who would render the burden of life less insupportable.

"Oh! Matilda," exclaimed Verezzi, "talk not to me of comfort, talk not of happiness, all that constituted my

[1] In the original edition, the inverted commas are misplaced so as to take in the words *in a softened accent.*

comfort, all to which I looked forward with rapturous anticipation of happiness, is fled—fled for ever."

Ceaselessly did Matilda watch by the bed-side of Verezzi; the melting tenderness of his voice, the melancholy, interesting expression of his countenance, but added fuel to the flame which consumed her: her soul was engrossed by one idea; every extraneous passion was conquered, and nerved for the execution of its fondest purpose; a seeming tranquillity overspread her mind, not that tranquillity which results from conscious innocence, and mild delights, but that which calms every tumultuous emotion for a time; when firm in a settled purpose, the passions but pause, to break out with more resistless violence. In the mean time, the strength of Verezzi's constitution overcame the malignity of his disorder, returning strength again braced his nerves, and he was able to descend to the saloon.

The violent grief of Verezzi had subsided into a deep and settled melancholy; he could now talk of his Julia, indeed it was his constant theme; he spoke of her virtues, her celestial form, her sensibility, and by his ardent professions of eternal fidelity to her memory, unconsciously almost drove Matilda to desperation.—Once he asked Matilda how she died, for on the day when the intelligence first turned his brain, he waited not to hear the particulars, the bare fact drove him to instant madness.

Matilda was startled at the question, yet ready invention supplied the place of a premeditated story.

"Oh! my friend," said she tenderly, "unwillingly do I tell you, that for you she died; disappointed love, like a worm in the bud, destroyed the unhappy Julia; fruitless were all her endeavours to find you, till at last concluding that you were lost to her for ever, a deep melancholy by degrees consumed her, and gently led to the grave—she sank into the arms of death without a groan."

"And there shall I soon follow her," exclaimed Verezzi, as a severer pang of anguish and regret darted through his soul. "I caused her death, whose life was far, far dearer to me than my own. But now it is all over, my hopes of happiness in this world are blasted, blasted for ever."

As he said this, a convulsive sigh heaved his breast, and the tears silently rolled down his cheeks; for some time, in vain were Matilda's endeavours to calm him, till at last, mellowed by time, and overcome by reflection, his violent and fierce sorrow was softened into a fixed melancholy.

Unremittingly Matilda attended him, and gratified his every wish: she, conjecturing that solitude might be detrimental to him, often entertained parties, and endeavoured by gaiety to drive away his dejection, but if Verezzi's spirits were elevated by company and merriment, in solitude again they sank, and a deeper melancholy, a severer regret possessed his bosom, for having allowed himself to be momentarily interested by any thing but the remembrance of his Julia; for he felt a soft, a tender and ecstatic emotion of regret, when retrospection portrayed

the blissful time long since gone by, while happy in the society of her whom he idolised, he thought he could be never otherwise than then, enjoying the sweet, the serene delights of association with a congenial mind, he often now amused himself in retracing with his pencil, from memory, scenes which, though in his Julia's society he had beheld unnoticed, yet were now hallowed by the remembrance of her: for he always associated the idea of Julia with the remembrance of those scenes which she had so often admired, and where, accompanied by her, he had so often wandered.

Matilda, meanwhile, firm in the purpose of her soul, unremittingly persevered: she calmed her mind, and though, at intervals, shook by almost super-human emotions, before Verezzi a fixed serenity, a well-feigned sensibility, and a downcast tenderness, marked her manner. Grief, melancholy, a fixed, a quiet depression of spirits, seemed to have calmed every fiercer feeling, when she talked with Verezzi of his lost Julia: but, though subdued for the present, revenge, hate, and the fervour of disappointed love, burned her soul.

Often, when she had retired from Verezzi, when he had talked with tenderness, as he was wont, of Julia, and sworn everlasting fidelity to her memory, would Matilda's soul be tortured by fiercest desperation.

One day, when conversing with him of Julia, she ventured to hint, though remotely, at her own faithful and ardent attachment.

"Think you," replied Verezzi, "that because my

Julia's spirit is no longer enshrined in its earthly form, that I am the less devotedly, the less irrevocably hers? —No! no! I was hers, I am hers, and to all eternity shall be hers: and when my soul, divested of mortality, departs into another world, even amid the universal wreck of nature, attracted by congeniality of sentiment, it will seek the unspotted spirit of my idolised Julia.—Oh, Matilda! thy attention, thy kindness, calls for my warmest gratitude—thy virtue demands my sincerest esteem; but, devoted to the memory of Julia, I can *love* none but her."

Matilda's whole frame trembled with unconquerable emotion, as thus determinedly he rejected her; but, calming the more violent passions, a flood of tears rushed from her eyes; and, as she leant over the back of a sofa on which she reclined, her sobs were audible.

Verezzi's soul was softened towards her—he raised the humbled Matilda, and bid her be comforted, for he was conscious that her tenderness towards him deserved not an unkind return.

"Oh! forgive, forgive me!" exclaimed Matilda, with well-feigned humility; "I knew not what I said."—She then abruptly left the saloon.

Reaching her own apartment, Matilda threw herself on the floor, in an agony of mind too great to be described. Those infuriate passions, restrained as they had been in the presence of Verezzi, now agitated her soul with inconceivable terror. Shook by sudden and irresistible emotions, she gave vent to her despair.

"Where, then, is the boasted mercy of God," exclaimed the frantic Matilda, "if he suffer his creatures to endure agony such as this? or where his wisdom, if he implant in the heart passions furious—uncontrollable—as mine, doomed to destroy their happiness?"

Outraged pride, disappointed love, and infuriate revenge, revelled through her bosom. Revenge, which called for innocent blood—the blood of the hapless Julia.

Her passions were now wound up to the highest pitch of desperation. In indescribable agony of mind, she dashed her head against the floor—she imprecated a thousand curses upon Julia, and swore eternal revenge.

At last, exhausted by their own violence, the warring passions subsided—a calm took possession of her soul—she thought again upon Zastrozzi's advice—Was she now cool? was she now collected?

She was now immersed in a chain of thought; unaccountable, even to herself, was the serenity which had succeeded.

CHAPTER X.

PERSEVERING in the prosecution of her design, the time passed away slowly to Matilda; for Verezzi's frame, becoming every day more emaciated, threatened, to her alarmed imagination, approaching dissolution.—Slowly to Verezzi; for he waited with impatience for the arrival of death, since nothing but misery was his in this world.

Useless would it be to enumerate the conflicts in Matilda's soul: suffice it to say, that they were many, and that their violence progressively increased.

Verezzi's illness at last assumed so dangerous an appearance that Matilda, alarmed, sent for a physician.

The humane man, who had attended Verezzi before, was from home, but one, skilful in his profession, arrived, who declared that a warmer climate could alone restore Verezzi's health.

Matilda proposed to him to remove to a retired and picturesque spot which she possessed in the Venetian territory. Verezzi, expecting speedy dissolution, and

conceiving it to be immaterial where he died, consented; and indeed he was unwilling to pain one so kind as Matilda by a refusal.

The following morning was fixed for the journey.

The morning arrived, and Verezzi was lifted into the chariot, being yet extremely weak and emaciated.

Matilda, during the journey, by every care, every kind and sympathising attention, tried to drive away Verezzi's melancholy; sensible that, could the weight which pressed upon his spirits be removed, he would speedily regain health. But, no! it was impossible. Though he was grateful for Matilda's attention, a still deeper shade of melancholy overspread his features; a more heart-felt inanity and languor sapped his life. He was sensible of a total distaste of former objects—objects which, perhaps, had formerly forcibly interested him. The terrific grandeur of the Alps, the dashing cataract, as it foamed beneath their feet, ceased to excite those feelings of awe which formerly they were wont to inspire. The lofty pine-groves inspired no additional melancholy, nor did the blooming valleys of Piedmont, or the odoriferous orangeries which scented the air, gladden his deadened soul.

They travelled on—they soon entered the Venetian territory, where, in a gloomy and remote spot, stood the Castella di Laurentini.

It was situated in a dark forest—lofty mountains

around lifted their aspiring and craggy summits to the skies.

'The mountains were clothed half up by ancient pines and plane-trees, whose immense branches stretched far; and above, bare granite rocks, on which might be seen, occasionally, a scathed larch, lifted their gigantic and misshapen' forms.

In the centre of an amphitheatre, formed by these mountains, surrounded by wood, stood the Castella di Laurentini, whose grey turrets, and time-worn battlements, overtopped the giants of the forest.

Into this gloomy mansion was Verezzi conducted by Matilda. The only sentiment he felt, was surprise at the prolongation of his existence. As he advanced, supported by Matilda and a domestic, into the castella, Matilda's soul, engrossed by one idea, confused by its own unquenchable passions, felt not that ecstatic, that calm and serene delight, only experienced by the innocent, and which is excited by a return to the place where we have spent our days of infancy.

No—she felt not this: the only pleasurable emotion which her return to this remote castella afforded, was the hope that, disengaged from the tumult of, and proximity to the world, she might be the less interrupted in the prosecution of her madly-planned schemes.

Though Verezzi's melancholy seemed rather increased

[1] In the original edition, *mishapen*.

than diminished by the journey, yet his health was visibly improved by the progressive change of air and variation of scenery, which must, at times, momentarily alleviate the most deep-rooted grief; yet, again in a fixed spot—again left to solitude and his own torturing reflections, Verezzi's mind returned to his lost, his still adored Julia. He thought of her ever; unconsciously he spoke of her; and, by his rapturous exclamations, sometimes almost drove Matilda to desperation.

Several days thus passed away. Matilda's passion, which, mellowed by time, and diverted by the variety of objects, and the hurry of the journey, had relaxed its violence, now, like a stream pent up, burst all bounds.

But one evening, maddened by the tender protestations of eternal fidelity to Julia's memory which Verezzi uttered, her brain was almost turned.

Her tumultuous soul, agitated by contending emotions, flashed from her eyes. Unable to disguise the extreme violence of her sensations, in an ecstasy of despairing love, she rushed from the apartment, where she had left Verezzi, and, unaccompanied, wandered into the forest, to calm her emotions, and concert some better plans of revenge; for, in Verezzi's presence, she scarcely dared to think.

Her infuriated soul burned with fiercest revenge: she wandered into the trackless forest, and, conscious that she was unobserved, gave vent to her feelings in wild exclamations.

"Oh! Julia! hated Julia! words are not able to express my detestation of thee. Thou hast destroyed Verezzi—thy cursed image, revelling in his heart, has blasted my happiness for ever; but, ere I die, I will taste revenge—oh! exquisite revenge!" She paused—she thought of the passion which consumed her—"Perhaps one no less violent has induced Julia to rival me," said she. Again the idea of Verezzi's illness—perhaps his death—infuriated her soul. Pity, chased away by vengeance and disappointed passion, fled.—"Did I say that I pitied thee? Detested Julia, much did my words belie the feelings of my soul. No—no—thou shalt not escape me.—Pity thee!"

Again immersed in corroding thought, she heeded not the hour, till looking up, she saw the shades of night were gaining fast upon the earth. The evening was calm and serene: gently agitated by the evening zephyr, the lofty pines sighed mournfully. Far to the west appeared the evening star, which faintly glittered in the twilight. The scene was solemnly calm, but not in unison with Matilda's soul. Softest, most melancholy music, seemed to float upon the southern gale. Matilda listened—it was the nuns at a convent, chanting the requiem for the soul of a departed sister.

"Perhaps gone to heaven!" exclaimed Matilda, as, affected by the contrast, her guilty soul trembled. A chain of horrible racking thoughts pressed upon her soul; and, unable to bear the acuteness of her sensations, she hastily returned to the castella.

Thus, marked only by the varying paroxysms of the

passions which consumed her, Matilda passed the time: her brain was confused, her mind agitated by the ill success of her schemes, and her spirits, once so light and buoyant, were now depressed by disappointed hope.

What shall I next concert? was the mental inquiry of Matilda. Ah! I know not.

She suddenly started—she thought of Zastrozzi.

"Oh! that I should have till now forgotten Zastrozzi," exclaimed Matilda, as a new ray of hope darted through her soul. "But he is now at Naples, and some time must necessarily elapse before I can see him.

"Oh, Zastrozzi, Zastrozzi! would that you were here!"

No sooner had she well arranged her resolutions, which before had been confused by eagerness, than she summoned Ferdinand, on whose fidelity she dared to depend, and bid him speed to Naples, and bear a letter, with which he was intrusted, to Zastrozzi.

Meanwhile Verezzi's health, as the physician had predicted, was so much improved by the warm climate and pure air of the Castella di Laurentini, that, though yet extremely weak and emaciated, he was able, as the weather was fine, and the summer evenings tranquil, to wander, accompanied by Matilda, through the surrounding scenery.

In this gloomy solitude, where, except the occasional

and infrequent visits of a father confessor, nothing occurred to disturb the uniform tenour of their life, Verezzi was every thing to Matilda—she thought of him ever: at night, in dreams, his image was present to her enraptured imagination. She was uneasy, except in his presence; and her soul, shook by contending paroxysms of the passion which consumed her, was transported by unutterable ecstasies of delirious and maddening love.

Her taste for music was exquisite; her voice of celestial sweetness; and her skill, as she drew sounds of soul-touching melody from the harp, enraptured the mind to melancholy pleasure.

The affecting expression of her voice, mellowed as it was by the tenderness which at times stole over her soul, softened Verezzi's listening ear to ecstasy.

Yet, again recovering from the temporary delight which her seductive blandishments had excited, he thought of Julia. As he remembered her ethereal form, her retiring modesty, and unaffected sweetness, a more violent, a deeper pang of regret and sorrow assailed his bosom, for having suffered himself to be even momentarily interested by Matilda.

Hours, days, passed lingering away. They walked in the evenings around the environs of the castella—woods, dark and gloomy, stretched far—cloud-capt mountains reared their gigantic summits high; and, dashing amidst the jutting rocks, foaming cataracts, with sudden and impetuous course, sought the valley below.

Amid this scenery the wily Matilda usually led her victim.

One evening when the moon, rising over the gigantic outline of the mountain, silvered the far-seen cataract, Matilda and Verezzi sought the forest.

For a time neither spoke: the silence was uninterrupted, save by Matilda's sighs, which declared that violent and repressed emotions tortured the bosom within.

They silently advanced into the forest. The azure sky was spangled with stars—not a wind agitated the unruffled air—not a cloud obscured the brilliant concavity of heaven. They ascended an eminence, clothed with towering wood; the trees around formed an amphitheatre. Beneath, by a gentle ascent, an opening showed an immense extent of forest, dimly seen by the moon, which overhung the opposite mountain. The craggy heights beyond might distinctly be seen, edged by the beams of the silver moon.

Verezzi threw himself on the turf.

"What a beautiful scene, Matilda!" he exclaimed.

"Beautiful indeed," returned Matilda. "I have admired it ever, and brought you here this evening on purpose to discover whether you thought of the works of nature as I do."

"Oh! fervently do I admire this," exclaimed Verezzi,

as, engrossed by the scene before him, he gazed enraptured.

"Suffer me to retire for a few minutes," said Matilda.

Without waiting for Verezzi's answer, she hastily entered a small tuft of trees. Verezzi gazed surprised; and soon sounds of such ravishing melody stole upon the evening breeze, that Verezzi thought some spirit of the solitude had made audible to mortal ears ethereal music.

He still listened—it seemed to die away—and again a louder, a more rapturous swell, succeeded.

The music was in unison with the scene—it was in unison with Verezzi's soul: and the success of Matilda's artifice, in this respect, exceeded her most sanguine expectation.

He still listened—the music ceased—and Matilda's symmetrical form emerging from the wood, roused Verezzi from his vision.

He gazed on her—her loveliness and grace struck forcibly upon his senses: her sensibility, her admiration of objects which enchanted him, flattered him; and her judicious arrangement of the music, left no doubt in his mind but that, experiencing the same sensations herself, the feelings of his soul were not unknown to her.

Thus far every thing went on as Matilda desired. To touch his feelings had been her constant aim: could she find any thing which interested him; any thing to divert

his melancholy; or could she succeed in effacing another from his mind, she had no doubt but that he would quickly and voluntarily clasp her to his bosom.

By affecting to coincide with him in every thing—by feigning to possess that congeniality of sentiment and union of idea, which he thought so necessary to the existence of love, she doubted not soon to accomplish her purpose.

But sympathy and congeniality of sentiment, however necessary to that love which calms every fierce emotion, fills the soul with a melting tenderness, and, without disturbing it, continually possesses the soul, was by no means consonant to the ferocious emotions, the unconquerable and ardent passion which revelled through Matilda's every vein.

When enjoying the society of him she loved, calm delight, unruffled serenity, possessed not her soul. No—but, inattentive to every object but him, even her proximity to him agitated her with almost uncontrollable emotion.

Whilst watching his look, her pulse beat with unwonted violence, her breast palpitated, and, unconscious of it herself, an ardent and voluptuous fire darted from her eyes.

Her passion too, controlled as it was in the presence of Verezzi, agitated her soul with progressively-increasing fervour. Nursed by solitude, and wound up, perhaps,

beyond any pitch which another's soul might be capable of, it sometimes almost maddened her.

Still, surprised at her own forbearance, yet strongly perceiving the necessity of it, she spoke not again of her passion to Verezzi.

CHAPTER XI.

At last the day arrived when Matilda expected Ferdinand's return. Punctual to his time Ferdinand returned, and told Matilda that Zastrozzi had, for the present, taken up his abode at a cottage, not far from thence, and that he there awaited her arrival.

Matilda was much surprised that Zastrozzi preferred a cottage to her castella; but, dismissing that from her mind, hastily prepared to attend him.

She soon arrived at the cottage. Zastrozzi met her—he quickened his pace towards her.

"Well, Zastrozzi," exclaimed Matilda, inquiringly.

"Oh!" said Zastrozzi, "our schemes have all, as yet, been unsuccessful. Julia yet lives, and, surrounded by wealth and power, yet defies our vengeance. I was planning her destruction, when, obedient to your commands, I came here."

"Alas!" exclaimed Matilda, "I fear it must be ever

thus: but, Zastrozzi, much I need your advice—your assistance. Long have I languished in hopeless love: often have I expected, and as often have my eager expectations been blighted by disappointment."

A deep sigh of impatience burst from Matilda's bosom, as, unable to utter more, she ceased.

"'Tis but the image of that accursed Julia," replied Zastrozzi, "revelling in his breast, which prevents him from becoming instantly yours. Could you but efface that!"

"I would I could efface it," said Matilda: "the friendship which now exists between us, would quickly ripen into love, and I should be for ever happy. How, Zastrozzi, can that be done? But, before we think of happiness, we must have a care to our safety: we must destroy Julia, who yet endeavours, by every means, to know the event of Verezzi's destiny. But, surrounded by wealth and power as she is, how can that be done? No bravo in Naples dare attempt her life: no rewards, however great, could tempt the most abandoned of men to brave instant destruction, in destroying her; and should *we* attempt it, the most horrible tortures of the Inquisition, a disgraceful death, and that without the completion of our desire, would be the consequence."

"Think not so, Matilda," answered Zastrozzi; "think not, because Julia possesses wealth, that she is less assailable by the dagger of one eager for revenge as I am; or that, because she lives in splendor at Naples, that a poisoned chalice, prepared by your hand, the

hand of a disappointed rival, could not send her writhing and convulsed to the grave. No, no; she *can* die, nor shall we writhe on the rack."

"Oh!" interrupted Matilda, "I care not, if, writhing in the prisons of the Inquisition, I suffer the most excruciating torment; I care not if, exposed to public view, I suffer the most ignominious and disgraceful of deaths, if, before I die—if, before this spirit seeks another world, I gain my purposed design, I enjoy unutterable, and, as yet, inconceivable happiness."

The evening meanwhile came on, and, warned by the lateness of the hour to separate, Matilda and Zastrozzi parted.

Zastrozzi pursued his way to the cottage, and Matilda, deeply musing, retraced her steps to the castella.

The wind was fresh, and rather tempestuous: light fleeting clouds were driven rapidly across the dark-blue sky. The moon, in silver majesty, hung high in eastern ether, and rendered transparent as a celestial spirit the shadowy clouds which at intervals crossed her orbit, and by degrees vanished like a vision in the obscurity of distant air. On this scene gazed Matilda—a train of confused thought took possession of her soul—her crimes, her past life, rose in array to her terror-struck imagination. Still burning love, unrepressed, unconquerable passion, revelled through every vein: her senses, rendered delirious by guilty desire, were whirled around in an inexpressible ecstasy of anticipated delight—delight, not unmixed by confused apprehensions.

She stood thus with her arms folded, as if contemplating the spangled concavity of heaven.

It was late—later than the usual hour of return, and Verezzi had gone out to meet Matilda.

"What! deep in thought, Matilda?" exclaimed Verezzi, playfully.

Matilda's cheek, as he thus spoke, was tinged with a momentary blush; it however quickly passed away; and she replied, "I was enjoying the serenity of the evening, the beauty of the setting sun, and then the congenial twilight induced me to wander farther than usual."

The unsuspicious Verezzi observed nothing peculiar in the manner of Matilda; but, observing that the night air was chill, conducted her back to the castella. No art was left untried, no blandishment omitted, on the part of Matilda, to secure her victim. Every thing which he liked, she affected to admire: every sentiment uttered by Verezzi was always anticipated by the observing Matilda; but long was all in vain—long was every effort to obtain his love useless.

Often, when she touched the harp, and drew sounds of enchanting melody from its strings, whilst her almost celestial form bent over it, did Verezzi gaze enraptured, and, forgetful of every thing else, yielding himself to a tumultuous oblivion of pleasure, listened entranced.

But all her art could not draw Julia from his memory:

he was much softened towards Matilda; he felt esteem, tenderest esteem—but he yet loved not.

Thus passed the time.—Often would desperation, and an idea that Verezzi would never love her, agitate Matilda with most violent agony. The beauties of nature which surrounded the castella had no longer power to interest: borne away on swelling thought, often, in the solitude of her own apartment, her spirit was wafted on the wings of anticipating fancy. Sometimes imagination portrayed the most horrible images for futurity: Verezzi's hate, perhaps his total dereliction of her; his union with Julia, pressed upon her brain, and almost drove her to distraction, for Verezzi alone filled every thought; nourished by restless reveries, the most horrible anticipations blasted the blooming Matilda. —Sometimes, however, a gleam of sense shot across her soul: deceived by visions of unreal bliss, she acquired new courage, and fresh anticipations of delight, from a beam which soon withdrew its ray; for, usually sunk in gloom, her dejected eyes were fixed on the ground; though sometimes an ardent expression, kindled by the anticipation of gratified desire, flashed from their fiery orbits.

Often, whilst thus agitated by contending emotions, her soul was shook, and, unconscious of its intentions, knew not the most preferable plan to pursue, would she seek Zastrozzi: on him, unconscious why, she relied much—his words were those of calm reflection and experience; and his sophistry, whilst it convinced her that a superior being exists not, who can control our actions, brought peace to her mind—peace to be suc-

ceeded by horrible and resistless conviction of the falsehood of her coadjutor's arguments: still, however, they calmed her; and, by addressing her reason and passions at the same time, deprived her of the power of being benefited by either.

The health of Verezzi, meanwhile, slowly mended: his mind, however, shook by so violent a trial as it had undergone, recovered not its vigour, but, mellowed by time, his grief, violent and irresistible as it had been at first, now became a fixed melancholy, which spread itself over his features, was apparent in every action, and, by resistance, inflamed Matilda's passion to tenfold fury.

The touching tenderness of Verezzi's voice, the dejected softened expression of his eye, touched her soul with tumultuous yet milder emotions. In his presence she felt calmed; and those passions which, in solitude, were almost too fierce for endurance, when with him were softened into a tender though confused delight.

It was one evening, when no previous appointment existed between Matilda and Zastrozzi, that, overcome by disappointed passion, Matilda sought the forest.

The sky was unusually obscured, the sun had sunk beneath the western mountain, and its departing ray tinged the heavy clouds with a red glare.—The rising blast sighed through the towering pines, which rose loftily above Matilda's head: the distant thunder, hoarse as the murmurs of the grove, in indistinct echoes mingled with the hollow breeze; the scintillating lightning flashed

incessantly across her path, as Matilda, heeding not the storm, advanced along the trackless forest.

The crashing thunder now rattled madly above, the lightnings flashed a larger curve, and at intervals, through the surrounding gloom, showed a scathed larch, which, blasted by frequent storms, reared its bare head on a height above.

Matilda sat upon a fragment of jutting granite, and contemplated the storm which raged around her. The portentous calm, which at intervals occurred amid the reverberating thunder, portentous of a more violent tempest, resembled the serenity which spread itself over Matilda's mind—a serenity only to be succeeded by a fiercer paroxysm of passion.

CHAPTER XII.

STILL sat Matilda upon the rock—she still contemplated the tempest which raged around her.

The battling elements paused: an uninterrupted silence, deep, dreadful as the silence of the tomb, succeeded. Matilda heard a noise—footsteps were distinguishable, and looking up, a flash of vivid lightning disclosed to her view the towering form of Zastrozzi.

His gigantic figure was again involved in pitchy darkness, as the momentary lightning receded. A peal of crashing thunder again madly rattled over the zenith, and a scintillating flash announced Zastrozzi's approach, as he stood before Matilda.

Matilda, surprised at his approach, started as he addressed her, and felt an indescribable awe, when she reflected on the wonderful casualty which, in this terrific and tempestuous hour, had led them to the same spot.

"Doubtless his feelings are violent and irresistible as mine: perhaps *these* led him to meet me here."

She shuddered as she reflected; but smothering the sensations of alarm which she had suffered herself to be surprised by, she asked him what had led him to the forest.

"The same which led you here, Matilda," returned Zastrozzi: "the same influence which actuates us both, has doubtless inspired that congeniality which, in this frightful storm, led us to the same spot."

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, "how shall I touch the obdurate Verezzi's soul? he still despises me—he declares himself to be devoted to the memory of his Julia; and that although she be dead, he is not the less devotedly hers. What can be done?"

Matilda paused; and, much agitated, awaited Zastrozzi's reply.

Zastrozzi, meanwhile, stood collected in himself, and firm as the rocky mountain which lifts its summit to heaven.

"Matilda," said he, "to-morrow evening will pave the way for that happiness which your soul has so long panted for, if, indeed, the event which will then occur does not completely conquer Verezzi. But the violence of the tempest increases—let us seek shelter."

"Oh! heed not the tempest," said Matilda, whose expectations were raised to the extreme of impatience by Zastrozzi's dark hints—[1] "heed not the tempest, but

[1] The inverted commas here are wanting in the original.

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proceed, if you wish not to see me expiring at your feet."

"You fear not the tumultuous elements—nor do I," replied Zastrozzi—"I assert again, that if to-morrow evening you lead Verezzi to this spot—if, in the event which will here occur, you display that presence of mind which I believe you to possess, Verezzi is yours."

"Ah! what do you say, Zastrozzi, that Verezzi will be mine?" inquired Matilda, as the anticipation of inconceivable happiness dilated her soul with sudden and excessive delight.

"I say again, Matilda," returned Zastrozzi, "that if you dare to brave the dagger's point—if you but make Verezzi owe his life to you—"

Zastrozzi paused, and Matilda acknowledged her insight of his plan, which her enraptured fancy represented as the basis of her happiness.

"Could he, after she had, at the risk of her own life, saved his, unfeelingly reject her? Would those noble sentiments, which the greatest misfortunes were unable to extinguish, suffer that?—No."

Full of these ideas, her brain confused by the ecstatic anticipation of happiness which pressed upon it, Matilda retraced her footsteps towards the castella.

The violence of the storm which so lately had raged was passed—the thunder, in low and indistinct echoes

now sounded through the chain of rocky mountains, which stretched far to the north—the azure, and almost cloudless ether, was studded with countless stars, as Matilda entered the castella, and, as the hour was late, sought her own apartment.

Sleep fled not, as usual, from her pillow; but, overcome by excessive drowsiness, she soon sank to rest.

Confused dreams floated in her imagination, in which she sometimes supposed that she had gained Verezzi; at others, that, snatched from her ardent embrace, he was carried by an invisible power over rocky mountains, or immense and untravelled heaths, and that, in vainly attempting to follow him, she had lost herself in the trackless desert.

Awakened from disturbed and unconnected dreams, she arose.

The most tumultuous emotions of rapturous exultation filled her soul as she gazed upon her victim, who was sitting at a window which overlooked the waving forest.

Matilda seated herself by him, and most enchanting, most pensive music, drawn by her fingers from a harp, thrilled his soul with an ecstasy of melancholy; tears rolled rapidly down his cheeks; deep drawn, though gentle sighs heaved his bosom: his innocent eyes were mildly fixed upon Matilda, and beamed with compassion for one, whose only wish was gratification of her own inordinate desires, and destruction to his opening prospects of happiness.

She, with a ferocious pleasure, contemplated her victim; yet, curbing the passions of her soul, a meekness, a well-feigned sensibility, characterised her downcast eye.

She waited, with the smothered impatience of expectation, for the evening: then, had Zastrozzi affirmed, that she would lay a firm foundation for her happiness.

Unappalled, she resolved to brave the dagger's point: she resolved to bleed; and though her life-blood were to issue at the wound, to dare the event.

The evening at last arrived: the atmosphere was obscured by vapour, and the air more chill than usual; yet, yielding to the solicitations of Matilda, Verezzi accompanied her to the forest.

Matilda's bosom thrilled with inconceivable happiness, as she advanced towards the spot: her limbs, trembling with ecstasy, almost refused to support her. Unwonted sensations—sensations she had never felt before, agitated her bosom; yet, steeling her soul, and persuading herself that celestial transports would be the reward of firmness, she fearlessly advanced.

The towering pine-trees waved in the squally wind—the shades of twilight gained fast on the dusky forest—the wind died away, and a deep, a gloomy silence reigned.

They now had arrived at the spot which Zastrozzi had asserted would be the scene of an event which might lay the foundation of Matilda's happiness.

She was agitated by such violent emotions, that her every limb trembled, and Verezzi tenderly asked the reason of her alarm.

"Oh! nothing, nothing!" returned Matilda; but, stung by more certain anticipation of ecstasy by his tender inquiry, her whole frame trembled with tenfold agitation, and her bosom was filled with more unconquerable transport.

On the right, the thick umbrage of the forest trees, rendered undistinguishable any one who might lurk *there;* on the left, a frightful precipice yawned, at whose base a deafening cataract dashed with tumultuous violence around misshapen[1] and enormous masses of rock; and beyond, a gigantic and blackened mountain, reared its craggy summit to the skies.

They advanced towards the precipice. Matilda stood upon the dizzy height—her senses almost failed her, and she caught the branch of an enormous pine which impended over the abyss.

"How frightful a depth!" exclaimed Matilda.

"Frightful indeed," said Verezzi, as thoughtfully he contemplated the terrific depth beneath.

They stood for some time gazing on the scene in silence.

Footsteps were heard—Matilda's bosom thrilled with

[1] In the original, *mishapen*, as at p. 84: the sense also is subverted by the insertion of a semicolon after *violence* and a comma after *around*.

mixed sensations of delight and apprehension, as, summoning all her fortitude, she turned round.—A man advanced towards them.

"What is your business?" exclaimed Verezzi.

"Revenge!" returned the villain, as, raising a dagger high, he essayed to plunge it in Verezzi's bosom, but Matilda lifted her arm, and the dagger piercing it, touched not Verezzi. Starting forward, he fell to the earth, and the ruffian instantly dashed into the thick forest.

Matilda's snowy arm was tinged with purple gore: the wound was painful, but an expression of triumph flashed from her eyes, and excessive pleasure dilated her bosom: the blood streamed fast from her arm, and tinged the rock whereon they stood with a purple stain.

Verezzi started from the ground, and seeing the blood which streamed down Matilda's garments, in accents of terror demanded where she was wounded.

"Oh! think not upon that," she exclaimed, "but tell me—ah! tell me," said she, in a voice of well-feigned alarm, "are you wounded mortally? Oh! what sensations of terror shook me, when I thought that the dagger's point, after having pierced my arm, had drunk your life-blood."

"Oh!" answered Verezzi, "I am not wounded; but let us haste to the castella."

He then tore part of his vest, and with it bound

Matilda's arm. Slowly they proceeded towards the castella.

"What villain, Verezzi," said Matilda, "envious of my happiness, attempted his life, for whom I would ten thousand times sacrifice my own? Oh! Verezzi, how I thank God, who averted the fatal dagger from thy heart!"

Verezzi answered not; but his heart, his feelings, were irresistibly touched by Matilda's behaviour. Such noble contempt of danger, so ardent a passion, as to risk her life to preserve his, filled his breast with a tenderness towards her; and he felt that he could now deny her nothing, not even the sacrifice of the poor remains of his happiness, should she demand it.

Matilda's breast meanwhile swelled with sensations of unutterable delight: her soul, borne on the pinions of anticipated happiness, flashed in triumphant glances from her fiery eyes. She could scarcely forbear clasping Verezzi in her arms, and claiming him as her own; but prudence, and a fear of in what manner a premature declaration of love might be received, prevented her.

They arrived at the castella, and a surgeon from the neighbouring convent was sent for by Verezzi.

The surgeon soon arrived, examined Matilda's arm, and declared that no unpleasant consequences could ensue.—Retired to her own apartment, those transports, which before had been allayed by Verezzi's presence, now

unrestrained by reason, involved Matilda's senses in an ecstasy of pleasure.

She threw herself on the bed, and, in all the exaggerated colours of imagination, portrayed the transports which Zastrozzi's artifice had opened to her view.

Visions of unreal bliss floated during the whole night in her disordered fancy: her senses were whirled around in alternate ecstasies of happiness and despair, as almost palpable dreams pressed upon her disturbed brain.

At one time she imagined that Verezzi, consenting to their union, presented her his hand: that at her touch the flesh crumbled from it, and, a shrieking spectre, he fled from her view: again, silvery clouds floated across her sight, and unconnected, disturbed visions occupied her imagination till the morning.

Verezzi's manner, as he met Matilda the following morning, was unusually soft and tender; and in a voice of solicitude, he inquired concerning her health.

The roseate flush of animation which tinged her cheek, the triumphant glance of animation which danced in her scintillating eye, seemed to render the inquiry unnecessary.

A dewy moisture filled her eyes, as she gazed with an expression of tumultuous, yet repressed rapture, upon the hapless Verezzi.

Still did she purpose, in order to make her triumph

more certain, to protract the hour of victory; and, leaving her victim, wandered into the forest to seek Zastrozzi. When she arrived at the cottage, she learnt that he had walked forth.—She soon met him.

"Oh! Zastrozzi—my best Zastrozzi!" exclaimed Matilda, "what a source of delight have you opened to me! Verezzi is mine—oh! transporting thought! will be mine for ever. That distant manner which he usually affected towards me, is changed to a sweet, an ecstatic expression of tenderness. Oh! Zastrozzi, receive my best, my most fervent thanks."

"Julia need not die then," muttered Zastrozzi; "when once you possess Verezzi, her destruction is of little consequence."

The most horrible scheme of revenge at[1] this instant glanced across Zastrozzi's mind.

"Oh! Julia must die," said Matilda, "or I shall never be safe; such an influence does her image possess over Verezzi's mind, that I am convinced, were he to know that she lived, an estrangement from me would be the consequence. Oh! quickly let me hear that she is dead. I can never enjoy uninterrupted happiness until her dissolution."

"What you have just pronounced is Julia's death-warrant," said Zastrozzi, as he disappeared among the thick trees.

[1] In the original, *at* is here repeated.

Matilda returned to the castella.

Verezzi, at her return, expressed a tender apprehension, lest, thus wounded, she should have hurt herself by walking; but Matilda quieted his fears, and engaged him in interesting conversation, which seemed not to have for its object the seduction of his affection; though the ideas conveyed by her expressions were so artfully connected with it, and addressed themselves so forcibly to Verezzi's feelings, that he was convinced he ought to love Matilda, though he felt *that* within himself, which, in spite of reason—in spite of reflection—told him that it was impossible.

CHAPTER XIII.

> The enticing smile, the modest-seeming eye,
> Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heaven,
> Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death.
>
> THOMSON.

STILL did Matilda's blandishments—her unremitting attention—inspire Verezzi with a softened tenderness towards her.—He regarded her as one who, at the risk of her own life, had saved his; who loved him with an ardent affection, and whose affection was likely to be lasting: and though he could not regard her with that enthusiastic tenderness with which he even yet adored the memory of his Julia, yet he might esteem her—faithfully esteem her—and felt not that horror at uniting himself with her as formerly. But a conversation which he had with Julia recurred to his mind: he remembered well, that when they had talked of their speedy marriage, she had expressed an idea, that a union in this life might endure to all eternity; and that the chosen of his heart on earth, might, by congeniality of sentiment, be united in heaven.

The idea was hallowed by the remembrance of his

Julia; but chasing it, as an unreal vision, from his mind, again his high sentiments of gratitude prevailed.

Lost in these ideas, involved in a train of thought, and unconscious where his footsteps led him, he quitted the castella. His reverie was interrupted by low murmurs, which seemed to float on the silence of the forest: it was scarcely audible, yet Verezzi felt an undefinable wish to know what it was. He advanced towards it—it was Matilda's voice.

Verezzi approached nearer, and from within heard her voice in complaints.—He eagerly listened.—Her sobs rendered the words, which in passionate exclamations burst from Matilda's lips, almost inaudible. He still listened—a pause in the tempest of grief which shook Matilda's soul seemed to have taken place.

"Oh! Verezzi—cruel, unfeeling Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, as a fierce paroxysm of passion seized her brain —"will you thus suffer one who adores you, to linger in hopeless love, and witness the excruciating agony of one who idolises you, as I do, to madness?"

As she spoke thus, a long-drawn sigh closed the sentence.

Verezzi's mind was agitated by various emotions as he stood; but rushing in at last, raised Matilda in his arms, and tenderly attempted to comfort her.

She started as he entered—she heeded not his words;

but, seemingly overcome by shame, cast herself at his feet, and hid her face in his robe.

He tenderly raised her, and his expressions convinced her, that the reward of all her anxiety was now about to be reaped.

The most triumphant anticipation of transports to come filled her bosom; yet, knowing it to be necessary to dissemble—knowing that a shameless claim on his affections would but disgust Verezzi, she said—

"Oh! Verezzi, forgive me: supposing myself to be alone—supposing no one overheard the avowal of the secret of my soul, with which, believe me, I never more intended to have importuned you, what shameless sentiments—shameless even in solitude—have I not given vent to. I can no longer conceal, that the passion with which I adore you is unconquerable, irresistible: but, I conjure you, think not upon what you have this moment heard to my disadvantage; nor despise a weak unhappy creature, who feels it impossible to overcome the fatal passion which consumes her.

"Never more will I give vent, even in solitude, to my love—never more shall the importunities of the hapless Matilda reach your ears. To conquer a passion fervent, tender as mine, is impossible."

As she thus spoke, Matilda, seemingly overcome by shame, sank upon the turf.

A sentiment stronger than gratitude, more ardent than

esteem, and more tender than admiration, softened Verezzi's heart as he raised Matilda. Her symmetrical form shone with tenfold loveliness to his heated fancy: inspired with sudden fondness, he cast himself at her feet.

A Lethean torpor crept upon his senses; and, as he lay prostrate before Matilda, a total forgetfulness of every former event of his life swam in his dizzy brain. In passionate exclamations he avowed unbounded love.

"Oh, Matilda! dearest, angelic Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, [1] "I am even now unconscious what blinded me —what kept me from acknowledging my adoration of thee!—adoration never to be changed by circumstances —never effaced by time."

The fire of voluptuous, of maddening love, scorched his veins, as he caught the transported Matilda in his arms, and, in accents almost inarticulate with passion, swore eternal fidelity.

"And accept my oath of everlasting allegiance to thee, adored Verezzi," exclaimed Matilda: "accept my vows of eternal, indissoluble love."

Verezzi's whole frame was agitated by unwonted and ardent emotions. He called Matilda his wife—in the delirium of sudden fondness he clasped her to his bosom —"and though love like ours," exclaimed the infatuated Verezzi, "wants not the vain ties of human laws, yet,

[1] Inverted commas wanting in the original.

that our love may want not any sanction which could possibly be given to it, let immediate orders be given for the celebration of our union."

Matilda exultingly consented: never had she experienced sensations of delight like these: the feelings of her soul flushed in exulting glances from her fiery eyes. Fierce, transporting triumph filled her soul as she gazed on her victim, whose mildly-beaming eyes were now characterised by a voluptuous expression. Her heart beat high with transport; and, as they entered the castella, the swelling emotions of her bosom were too tumultuous for utterance.

Wild with passion, she clasped Verezzi to her beating breast; and, overcome by an ecstasy of delirious passion, her senses were whirled around in confused and inexpressible delight. A new and fierce passion raged likewise in Verezzi's breast: he returned her embrace with ardour, and clasped her in fierce transports.

But the adoration with which he now regarded Matilda, was a different sentiment from that chaste and mild emotion which had characterised his love for Julia: that passion, which he had fondly supposed would end but with his existence, was effaced by the arts of another.

Now was Matilda's purpose attained—the next day would behold her his bride—the next day would behold her fondest purpose accomplished.

With the most eager impatience, the fiercest anticipation of transport, did she wait for its arrival.

Slowly passed the day, and slowly did the clock toll each lingering hour as it rolled away.

The following morning at last arrived: Matilda arose from a sleepless couch—fierce, transporting triumph, flashed from her eyes as she embraced her victim. He returned it—he called her his dear and ever-beloved spouse; and, in all the transports of maddening love, declared his impatience for the arrival of the monk who was to unite them. Every blandishment—every thing which might dispel reflection, was this day put in practice by Matilda.

The monk at last arrived: the fatal ceremony—fatal to the peace of Verezzi—was performed.

A magnificent feast had been previously arranged; every luxurious viand, every expensive wine, which might contribute to heighten Matilda's triumph, was present in profusion.

Matilda's joy, her soul-felt triumph, was too great for utterance—too great for concealment. The exultation of her inmost soul flashed in expressive glances from her scintillating eyes, expressive of joy intense—unutterable.

Animated with excessive delight, she started from the table, and, seizing Verezzi's hand, in a transport of inconceivable bliss, dragged him in wild sport and varied movements to the sound of swelling and soul-touching melody.

"Come, my Matilda," at last exclaimed Verezzi, "come,

I am weary of transport—sick with excess of unutterable pleasure: let us retire, and retrace in dreams the pleasures of the day."

Little did Verezzi think that this day was the basis of his future misery: little did he think that, amid the roses of successful and licensed voluptuousness, regret, horror, and despair would arise, to blast the prospects which, Julia being forgot, appeared so fair, so ecstatic.

The morning came.—Inconceivable emotions—inconceivable to those who have never felt them—dilated Matilda's soul with an ecstasy of inexpressible bliss: every barrier to her passion was thrown down—every opposition conquered; still was her bosom the scene of fierce and contending passions.

Though in possession of every thing which her fancy had portrayed with such excessive delight, she was far from feeling that innocent and calm pleasure which soothes the soul, and, calming each violent emotion, fills it with a serene happiness. No—*her* brain was whirled around in transports; fierce, confused transports of visionary and unreal bliss: though her every pulse, her every nerve, panted with the delight of gratified and expectant desire; still was she not happy; she enjoyed not that tranquillity which is necessary to the existence of happiness.

In this temper of mind, for a short period she left Verezzi, as she had appointed a meeting with her coadjutor in wickedness.

She soon met him.

"I need not ask," exclaimed Zastrozzi, "for well do I see, in those triumphant glances, that Verezzi is thine; that the plan which we concerted when last we met, has put you in possession of that which your soul panted for."

"Oh! Zastrozzi!" said Matilda,—[1] "kind, excellent Zastrozzi; what words can express the gratitude which I feel towards you—what words can express the bliss exquisite, celestial, which I owe to your advice; yet still, amid the roses of successful love—amid the ecstasies of transporting voluptuousness—fear, blighting chilly fear, damps my hopes of happiness. Julia, the hated, accursed Julia's image, is the phantom which scares my otherwise certain confidence of eternal delight: could she but be hurled to destruction—could some other artifice of my friend sweep her from the number of the living—"

"'Tis enough, Matilda," interrupted Zastrozzi; "'tis enough: in six days hence meet me here; meanwhile, let not any corroding anticipations destroy your present happiness: fear not; but, on the arrival of your faithful Zastrozzi, expect the earnest of the happiness which you wish to enjoy for ever."

Thus saying, Zastrozzi departed, and Matilda retraced her steps to her castella.

Amid the delight, the ecstasy, for which her soul had so long panted—amid the embraces of him whom she had

[1] Inverted commas wanting in the original.

fondly supposed alone to constitute all terrestrial happiness, racking, corroding thoughts possessed Matilda's bosom.

Deeply musing on schemes of future delight—delight established by the gratification of most diabolical revenge, her eyes fixed upon the ground, heedless what path she pursued, Matilda advanced along the forest.

A voice aroused her from her reverie—it was Verezzi's—the well-known, the tenderly-adored tone, struck upon her senses forcibly: she started, and, hastening towards him, soon allayed those fears which her absence had excited in the fond heart of her spouse, and on which account he had anxiously quitted the castella to search for her.

Joy, rapturous, ecstatic happiness, untainted by fear, unpolluted by reflection, reigned for six days in Matilda's bosom.

Five days passed away, the sixth arrived, and, when the evening came, Matilda, with eager and impatient steps, sought the forest.

The evening was gloomy, dense vapours overspread the air; the wind, low and hollow, sighed mournfully in the gigantic pine trees, and whispered in low hissings among the withered shrubs which grew on the rocky prominences.

Matilda waited impatiently for the arrival of Zastrozzi. At last his towering form emerged from an interstice in the rocks.

He advanced towards her.

"Success! Victory! my Matilda," exclaimed Zastrozzi, in an accent of exultation—"Julia is—"

"You need add no more," interrupted Matilda: "kind, excellent Zastrozzi, I thank thee; but yet do say how you destroyed her—tell me by what racking, horrible torments, you launched her soul into eternity. Did she perish by the dagger's point? or did the torments of poison send her, writhing in agony, to the tomb."

"Yes," replied Zastrozzi; "she fell at my feet, overpowered by resistless convulsions. Who more ready than myself to restore the Marchesa's fleeted senses—who more ready than myself to account for her fainting, by observing, that the heat of the assembly had momentarily overpowered her. But Julia's senses were fled for ever; and it was not until the swiftest gondola in Venice had borne me far towards your castella, that il consiglio di dieci searched for, without discovering the offender.

"Here I must remain; for, were I discovered, the fatal consequences to us both are obvious. Farewell for the present," added he, "meanwhile, happiness attend you; but go not to Venice."

"Where have you been so late, my love?" tenderly inquired Verezzi as she returned. "I fear lest the night air, particularly that of so damp an evening as this, might affect your health."

"No, no, my dearest Verezzi, it has not," hesitatingly answered Matilda.

"You seem pensive, you seem melancholy, my Matilda," said Verezzi: "lay open your heart to me. I am afraid something, of which I am ignorant, presses upon your bosom.

"Is it the solitude of this remote castella which represses the natural gaiety of your soul? Shall we go to Venice?"

"Oh! no, no!" hastily and eagerly interrupted Matilda: "not to Venice—we must not go to Venice."

Verezzi was slightly surprised, but imputing her manner to indisposition, it passed off.

Unmarked by events of importance, a month passed away. Matilda's passion, unallayed by satiety, unconquered by time, still raged with its former fierceness—still was every earthly delight centred in Verezzi; and, in the air-drawn visions of her imagination, she portrayed to herself that this happiness would last for ever.

It was one evening that Verezzi and Matilda sat, happy in the society of each other, that a servant entering, presented the latter with a sealed paper.

The contents were: "Matilda Contessa di Laurentini is summoned to appear before the holy inquisition—to appear before its tribunal, immediately on the receipt of this summons."

Matilda's cheek, as she read it, was blanched with

terror. The summons—the fatal, irresistible summons, struck her with chilly awe. She attempted to thrust it into her bosom; but, unable to conceal her terror, she essayed to rush from the apartment—but it was in vain: her trembling limbs refused to support her, and she sank fainting on the floor.

Verezzi raised her—he restored her fleeting senses; he cast himself at her feet, and in the tenderest, most pathetic accents, demanded the reason of her alarm. "And if," said he, "it is any thing of which I have unconsciously been guilty—if it is any thing in my conduct which has offended you, oh! how soon, how truly would I repent. Dearest Matilda, I adore you to madness: tell me then quickly—confide in one who loves you as I do."

"Rise, Verezzi," exclaimed Matilda, in a tone expressive of serene horror: "and since the truth can no longer be concealed, peruse that letter."

She presented him the fatal summons. He eagerly snatched it: breathless with impatience, he opened it. But what words can express the consternation of the affrighted Verezzi, as the summons, mysterious and inexplicable to him, pressed upon his straining eye-ball. For an instant he stood fixed in mute and agonising thought. At last, in the forced serenity of despair, he demanded what was to be done."

Matilda answered not; for her soul, borne on the pinions of anticipation, at that instant portrayed to itself ignominious and agonising dissolution.

"What is to be done?" again, in a deeper tone of despair, demanded Verezzi.

"We must instantly to Venice," returned Matilda, collecting her scattered faculties: "we must to Venice; there, I believe, we may be safe. But in some remote corner of the city we must for the present fix our habitations: we must condescend to curtail our establishment; and, above all, we must avoid particularity. But will my Verezzi descend from the rank of life in which his birth has placed him, and with the outcast Matilda's fortunes quit grandeur?"

"Matilda! dearest Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, "talk not thus; you know I am ever yours; you know I love you, and with you, could conceive a cottage elysium."

Matilda's eyes flushed with momentary triumph as Verezzi spoke thus, amid the alarming danger which impended her: under the displeasure of the inquisition, whose motives for prosecution are inscrutable, whose decrees are without appeal, her soul, in the possession of all it held dear on earth, secure of Verezzi's affection, thrilled with pleasurable emotions, yet not unmixed with alarm.

She now prepared to depart. Taking, therefore, out of all her domestics, but the faithful Ferdinand, Matilda, accompanied by Verezzi, although the evening was far advanced, threw herself into a chariot, and leaving every one at the castella unacquainted with her intentions, took the road through the forest which led to Venice.

The convent bell, almost inaudible from distance, tolled ten as the carriage slowly ascended a steep which rose before it.

"But how do you suppose, my Matilda," said Verezzi, "that it will be possible for us to evade the scrutiny of the inquisition?".

"Oh!" returned Matilda, "we must not appear in our true characters—we must disguise them."

"But," inquired Verezzi, "what crime do you suppose the inquisition to allege against you?"

"Heresy, I suppose," said Matilda. "You know, an enemy has nothing to do but lay an accusation of heresy against any unfortunate and innocent individual, and the victim expires in horrible tortures, or lingers the wretched remnant of his life in dark and solitary cells."

A convulsive sigh heaved Verezzi's bosom.

"And is that then to be my Matilda's destiny?" he exclaimed in horror. [1]"No—Heaven will never permit such excellence to suffer."

Meanwhile they had arrived at the Brenta. The Brenta's stream glided silently beneath the midnight breeze towards the Adriatic.

Towering poplars, which loftily raised their spiral

[1] Inverted commas wanting in the original.

forms on its bank, cast a gloomier shade upon the placid wave.

Matilda and Verezzi entered a gondola, and the grey tints of approaching morn had streaked the eastern ether, before they entered the grand canal at Venice; and passing the Rialto, proceeded onwards to a small, though not inelegant mansion, in the eastern suburbs.

Every thing here, though not grand, was commodious; and as they entered it, Verezzi expressed his approbation of living here retired.

Seemingly secure from the scrutiny of the inquisition, Matilda and Verezzi passed some days of uninterrupted happiness.

At last, one evening Verezzi, tired even with monotony of ecstasy, proposed to Matilda to take the gondola, and go to a festival which was to be celebrated at St. Mark's Place.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE evening was serene.—Fleecy clouds floated on the horizon—the moon's full orb, in cloudless majesty, hung high in air, and was reflected in silver brilliancy by every wave of the Adriatic, as, gently agitated by the evening breeze, they dashed against innumerable gondolas which crowded the Laguna.

Exquisite harmony, borne on the pinions of the tranquil air, floated in varying murmurs: it sometimes died away, and then again swelling louder, in melodious undulations softened to pleasure every listening ear.

Every eye which gazed on the fairy scene beamed with pleasure; unrepressed gaiety filled every heart but Julia's, as with a vacant stare, unmoved by feelings of pleasure, unagitated by the gaiety which filled every other soul, she contemplated the varied scene. A magnificent gondola carried the Marchesa di Strobazzo; and the innumerable flambeaux which blazed around her rivalled the meridian sun.

It was the pensive, melancholy Julia, who, immersed

in thought, sat unconscious of every external object, whom the fierce glance of Matilda measured with a haughty expression of surprise and revenge. The dark fire which flashed from her eye, more than told the feelings of her soul, as she fixed it on her rival; and had it possessed the power of the basilisk's, Julia would have expired on the spot.

It was the ethereal form of the now forgotton Julia which first caught Verezzi's eye. For an instant he gazed with surprise upon her symmetrical figure, and was about to point her out to Matilda, when, in the downcast countenance of the enchanting female, he recognised his long-lost Julia.

To paint the feelings of Verezzi—as Julia raised her head from the attitude in which it was fixed, and disclosed to his view that countenance which he had formerly gazed on in ecstasy, the index of that soul to which he had sworn everlasting fidelity—is impossible.

The Lethean torpor, as it were, which before had benumbed him; the charm, which had united him to Matilda, was dissolved.

All the air-built visions of delight, which had but a moment before floated in gay variety in his enraptured imagination, faded away, and, in place of these, regret, horror, and despairing repentance, reared their heads amid the roses of momentary voluptuousness.

He still gazed entranced, but Julia's gondola, indistinct from distance, mocked his straining eyeball.

For a time neither spoke: the gondola rapidly passed onwards, but, immersed in thought, Matilda and Verezzi heeded not its rapidity.

They had arrived at St. Mark's Place, and the gondolier's voice, as he announced it, was the first interruption of the silence.

They started.—Verezzi now, for the first time, aroused from his revery of horror, saw that the scene before him was real; and that the oaths of fidelity which he had so often and so fervently sworn to Julia were broken.

The extreme of horror seized his brain—a frigorific torpidity of despair chilled every sense, and his eyes, fixedly, gazed on vacancy.

"Oh! return—instantly return!" impatiently replied Matilda to the question of the gondolier.

The gondolier, surprised, obeyed her, and they returned.

The spacious canal was crowded with gondolas; merriment and splendour reigned around, enchanting harmony stole over the scene; but, listless of the music, heeding not the splendour, Matilda sat lost in a maze of thought.

Fiercest vengeance revelled through her bosom, and, in her own mind, she resolved a horrible purpose.

Meanwhile, the hour was late, the moon had gained the zenith, and poured her beams vertically on the un-

ruffled Adriatic, when the gondola stopped before Matilda's mansion.

A sumptuous supper had been prepared for their return. Silently Matilda entered — silently Verezzi followed.

Without speaking, Matilda seated herself at the supper table: Verezzi, with an air of listlessness, threw himself into a chair beside her.

For a time neither spoke.

"You are not well to-night," at last stammered out Verezzi: "what has disturbed you?"

"Disturbed me!" repeated Matilda: "why do you suppose that any thing has disturbed me?"

A more violent paroxysm of horror seemed now to seize Verezzi's brain. He pressed his hand to his burning forehead—the agony of his mind was too great to be concealed—Julia's form, as he had last seen her, floated in his fancy, and, overpowered by the resistlessly horrible ideas which pressed upon them, his senses failed him: he faintly uttered Julia's name—he sank forward, and his throbbing temples reclined on the table.

"Arise! awake! prostrate, perjured Verezzi, awake!" exclaimed the infuriate Matilda, in a tone of gloomy horror.

Verezzi started up, and gazed with surprise upon the

countenance of Matilda, which, convulsed by passion, flashed desperation and revenge.

"'Tis plain," said Matilda, gloomily, "'tis plain, he loves me not."

A confusion of contending emotions battled in Verezzi's bosom: his marriage vow—his faith plighted to Matilda—convulsed his soul with indescribable agony.

Still did she possess a great empire over his soul—still was her frown terrible—and still did the hapless Verezzi tremble at the tones of her voice, as, in a phrensy of desperate passion, she bade him quit her for ever: "And," added she, "go, disclose the retreat of the outcast Matilda to her enemies; deliver me to the inquisition, that a union with her you detest may fetter you no longer."

Exhausted by breathless agitation, Matilda ceased: the passions of her soul flashed from her eyes; ten thousand conflicting emotions battled in Verezzi's bosom; he knew scarce what to do; but, yielding to the impulse of the moment, he cast himself at Matilda's feet, and groaned deeply.

At last the words, "I am ever yours, I ever shall be yours," escaped his lips.

For a time Matilda stood immoveable. At last she looked on Verezzi; she gazed downwards upon his majestic and youthful figure; she looked upon his soul-illumined countenance, and tenfold love assailed her softened soul. She raised him—in an oblivious deli-

rium of sudden fondness she clasped him to her bosom, and, in wild and hurried expressions, asserted her right to his love.

Her breast palpitated with fiercest emotions; she pressed her burning lips to his; most fervent, most voluptuous sensations of ecstasy revelled through her bosom.

Verezzi caught the infection; in an instant of oblivion, every oath of fidelity which he had sworn to another, like a baseless cloud, dissolved away; a Lethean torpor crept over his senses; he forgot Julia, or remembered her only as an uncertain vision, which floated before his fancy more as an ideal being of another world, whom he might hereafter adoré there, than as an enchanting and congenial female, to whom his oaths of eternal fidelity had been given.

Overcome by unutterable transports of returning bliss, she started from his embrace—she seized his hand—her face was overspread with a heightened colour as she pressed it to her lips.

"And are you then mine—mine for ever?" rapturously exclaimed Matilda.

"Oh! I am thine—thine to all eternity," returned the infatuated Verezzi: "no earthly power shall sever us; joined by congeniality of soul, united by a bond to which God himself bore witness."

He again clasped her to his bosom—again, as an

earnest of fidelity, imprinted a fervent kiss on her glowing cheek; and, overcome by the violent and resistless emotions of the moment, swore, that nor heaven nor hell should cancel the union which he here solemnly and unequivocally renewed.

Verezzi filled an overflowing goblet.

"Do you love me?" inquired Matilda.

"May the lightning of heaven consume me, if I adore thee not to distraction! may I be plunged in endless torments, if my love for thee, celestial Matilda, endures not for ever!"

Matilda's eyes flashed fiercest triumph; the exultingly delightful feelings of her soul were too much for utterance—she spoke not, but gazed fixedly on Verezzi's countenance.

CHAPTER XV.

> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> The effect and it. Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, ye murd'ring ministers,
> Wherever, in your sightless substances,
> Ye wait on nature's mischief.
>
> MACBETH.

VEREZZI raised the goblet which he had just filled, and exclaimed, in an impassioned tone—

"My adored Matilda! this is to thy happiness—this is to thy every wish; and if I cherish a single thought which centres not in thee, may the most horrible tortures which ever poisoned the peace of man, drive me instantly to distraction. God of heaven! witness thou my oath, and write it in letters never to be erased! Ministering spirits, who watch over the happiness of mortals, attend! for here I swear eternal fidelity, indissoluble, unalterable affection to Matilda!"

He said—he raised his eyes towards heaven—he gazed upon Matilda. Their eyes met—hers gleamed with a triumphant expression of unbounded love.

Verezzi raised the goblet to his lips—when, lo! on a sudden he dashed it to the ground—his whole frame was shook by horrible convulsions—his glaring eyes, starting from their sockets, rolled wildly around: seized with sudden madness, he drew a dagger from his girdle, and with fellest intent raised it high—

What phantom blasted Verezzi's eyeball! what made the impassioned lover dash a goblet to the ground, which he was about to drain as a pledge of eternal love to the choice of his soul! and why did he, infuriate, who had, but an instant before, imagined Matilda's arms an earthly paradise, attempt to rush unprepared into the presence of his Creator!—It was the mildly-beaming eyes of the lovely but forgotton Julia, which spoke reproaches to the soul of Verezzi—it was her celestial countenance, shaded by dishevelled ringlets, which spoke daggers to the false one; for, when he had raised the goblet to his lips—when, sublimed by the maddening fire of voluptuousness to the height of enthusiastic passion, he swore indissoluble fidelity to another—Julia stood before him!

Madness—fiercest madness—revelled through his brain. He raised the poniard high, but Julia rushed forwards, and, in accents of desperation, in a voice of alarmed tenderness, besought him to spare himself—to spare her—for all might yet be well.

"Oh! never, never!" exclaimed Verezzi, frantically: "no peace but in the grave for me.——I am—I am—married to Matilda."

Saying this, he fell backwards upon a sofa in strong

convulsions, yet his hand still firmly grasped the fatal poniard.

Matilda, meanwhile, fixedly contemplated the scene. Fiercest passions raged through her breast—vengeance, disappointed love—disappointed in the instant too when she had supposed happiness to be hers for ever, rendered her bosom the scene of wildest anarchy.

Yet she spoke not—she moved not—but, collected in herself, stood waiting the issue of that event, which had so unexpectedly dissolved her visions of air-built ecstasy.

Serened to firmness from despair, Julia administered every thing which could restore Verezzi with the most unremitting attention. At last he recovered.—He slowly raised himself, and starting from the sofa where he lay, his eyes rolling wildly, and his whole frame convulsed by fiercest agitation, he raised the dagger which he still retained, and, with a bitter smile of exultation, plunged it into his bosom !—His soul fled without a groan, and his body fell to the floor, bathed in purple blood.

Maddened by this death-blow to all anticipation of happiness, Matilda's faculties, as she stood, whirled in wild confusion : she scarce knew where she was.

At last a portentous, a frightful calm, spread itself over her soul. Revenge, direst revenge, swallowed up every other feeling. Her eyes scintillated with a fiend-like expression. She advanced to the lifeless corse of Verezzi —she plucked the dagger from his bosom—it was stained with his life's-blood, which trickled fast from the point to

the floor. She raised it on high, and impiously called upon the God of nature to doom her to endless torments, should Julia survive her vengeance.

She advanced towards her victim, who lay bereft of sense on the floor: she shook her rudely, and grasping a handful of her dishevelled hair, raised her from the earth.

"Knowest thou me?" exclaimed Matilda, in frantic passion—"knowest thou the injured Laurentini? Behold this dagger, reeking with my husband's blood—behold that pale corse, in whose now cold breast, thy accursed image revelling, impelled to commit the deed which deprives me of happiness for ever."

Julia's senses, roused by Matilda's violence, returned. She cast her eyes upwards, with a timid expression of apprehension, and beheld the infuriate Matilda convulsed by fiercest passion, and a blood-stained dagger raised aloft, threatening instant death.

"Die! detested wretch," exclaimed Matilda, in a paroxysm of rage, as she violently attempted to bathe the stiletto in the life-blood of her rival; but Julia starting aside, the weapon slightly wounded her neck, and the ensanguined stream stained her alabaster bosom.

She fell on the floor, but suddenly starting up, attempted to escape her bloodthirsty persecutor.

Nerved anew by this futile attempt to escape her vengeance, the ferocious Matilda seized Julia's floating

hair, and holding her back with fiend-like strength, stabbed her in a thousand places; and, with exulting pleasure, again and again buried the dagger to the hilt in her body, even after all remains of life were annihilated.

At last the passions of Matilda, exhausted by their own violence, sank into a deadly calm: she threw the dagger violently from her, and contemplated the terrific scene before her with a sullen gaze.

Before her, in the arms of death, lay him on whom her hopes of happiness seemed to have formed so firm a basis.

Before her lay her rival, pierced with innumerable wounds, whose head reclined on Verezzi's bosom, and whose angelic features, even in death, a smile of affection pervaded.

There she herself stood, an isolated guilty being. A fiercer paroxysm of passion now seized her: in an agony of horror, too great to be described, she tore her hair in handfuls—she blasphemed the power who had given her being, and imprecated eternal torments upon the mother who had born her.

"And is it for this," added the ferocious Matilda—"is it for horror, for torments such as these, that He, whom monks call all-merciful, has created me?"

She seized the dagger which lay on the floor.

"Ah! friendly dagger," she exclaimed, in a voice of

fiend-like horror, "would that thy blow produced annihilation! with what pleasure then would I clasp thee to my heart!"

She raised it high—she gazed on it—the yet warm blood of the innocent Julia trickled from its point.

The guilty Matilda shrunk at death—she let fall the up-raised dagger—her soul had caught a glimpse of the misery which awaits the wicked hereafter, and, spite of her contempt of religion—spite of her, till now, too firm dependence on the doctrines of atheism, she trembled at futurity; and a voice from within, which whispers "thou shalt never die!" spoke daggers to Matilda's soul.

Whilst thus she stood entranced in a delirium of despair, the night wore away, and the domestic who attended her, surprised at the unusual hour to which they had prolonged the banquet, came to announce the lateness of the hour; but opening the door, and perceiving Matilda's garments stained with blood, she started back with affright, without knowing the full extent of horror which the chamber contained, and alarmed the other domestics with an account that Matilda had been stabbed.

In a crowd they all came to the door, but started back in terror when they saw Verezzi and Julia stretched lifeless on the floor.

Summoning fortitude from despair, Matilda loudly called for them to return; but fear and horror overbalanced her commands, and, wild with affright, they all

rushed from the chamber, except Ferdinand, who advanced to Matilda, and demanded an explanation.

Matilda gave it, in few and hurried words.

Ferdinand again quitted the apartment, and told the credulous domestics, that an unknown female had surprised Verezzi and Matilda; that she had stabbed Verezzi, and then committed suicide.

The crowd of servants, as in mute terror they listened to Ferdinand's account, entertained not a doubt of the truth.—Again and again they demanded an explanation of the mysterious affair, and employed their wits in conjecturing what might be the cause of it; but the more they conjectured, the more were they puzzled; till at last a clever fellow, named Pietro, who, hating Ferdinand on account of the superior confidence with which his lady treated him, and supposing more to be concealed in this affair than met the ear, gave information to the police, and, before morning, Matilda's dwelling was surrounded by a party of officials belonging to il consiglio di dieci.

Loud shouts rent the air as the officials attempted the entrance. Matilda still was in the apartment where, during the night, so bloody a tragedy had been acted; still in speechless horror was she extended on the sofa, when a loud rap at the door aroused the horror-tranced wretch. She started from the sofa in wildest perturbation, and listened attentively. Again was the noise repeated, and the officials rushed in.

They searched every apartment; at last they entered that in which Matilda, motionless with despair, remained.

Even the stern officials, hardy, unfeeling as they were, started back with momentary horror as they beheld the fair countenance of the murdered Julia; fair even in death, and her body disfigured with numberless ghastly wounds.

"This cannot be suicide," muttered one, who, by his superior manner, seemed to be their chief, as he raised the fragile form of Julia from the ground, and the blood, scarcely yet cold, trickled from her vestments.

"Put your orders in execution," added he.

Two officials advanced towards Matilda, who, standing apart with seeming tranquillity, awaited their approach.

"What wish you with me?" exclaimed Matilda haughtily.

The officials answered not; but their chief, drawing a paper from his vest, which contained an order for the arrest of Matilda La Contessa di Laurentini, presented it to her.

She turned pale; but, without resistance, obeyed the mandate, and followed the officials in silence to the canal,

where a gondola waited, and in a short time she was in the gloomy prisons of il consiglio di dieci.

A little straw was the bed of the haughty Laurentini; a pitcher of water and bread was her sustenance; gloom, horror, and despair pervaded her soul: all the pleasures which she had but yesterday tasted; all the ecstatic blisses which her enthusiastic soul had painted for futurity, like the unreal vision of a dream, faded away; and, confined in a damp and narrow cell, Matilda saw that all her hopes of future delight would end in speedy and ignominious dissolution.

Slow passed the time—slow did the clock at St. Mark's toll the revolving hours as languidly they passed away.

Night came on, and the hour of midnight struck upon Matilda's soul as her death knell.

A noise was heard in the passage which led to the prison.

Matilda raised her head from the wall against which it was reclined, and eagerly listened, as if in expectation of an event which would seal her future fate. She still gazed, when the chains of the entrance were unlocked. The door, as it opened, grated harshly on its hinges, and two officials entered.

"Follow me," was the laconic injunction which greeted her terror-struck ear.

Trembling, Matilda arose: her limbs, stiffened by confinement, almost refused to support her; but collecting fortitude from desperation, she followed the relentless officials in silence.

One of them bore a lamp, whose rays darting in uncertain columns, showed, by strong contrasts of light and shade, the extreme massiness of the passages.

The Gothic frieze above was worked with art; and the corbels, in various and grotesque forms, jutted from the tops of clustered pilasters.

They stopped at a door. Voices were heard from within: their hollow tones filled Matilda's soul with unconquerable tremors. But she summoned all her resolution—she resolved to be collected during the trial; and even, if sentenced to death, to meet her fate with fortitude, that the populace, as they gazed, might not exclaim—"The poor Laurentini dared not to die."

These thoughts were passing in her mind during the delay which was occasioned by the officials conversing with another whom they met there.

At last they ceased—an uninterrupted silence reigned: the immense folding doors were thrown open, and disclosed to Matilda's view a vast and lofty apartment. In the centre was a table, which a lamp, suspended from the centre, overhung, and where two stern-looking men, habited in black vestments, were seated.

Scattered papers covered the table, with which the two men in black seemed busily employed.

Two officials conducted Matilda to the table where they sat, and, retiring, left her there.

CHAPTER XVI.

> Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have ;
> Thou art the torturer of the brave.
>
> MARMION.

ONE of the inquisitors raised his eyes; he put back the papers which he was examining, and in a solemn tone asked her name.

"My name is Matilda; my title La Contessa di Laurentini," haughtily she answered; "nor do I know the motive for that inquiry, except it were to exult over my miseries, which you are, I suppose, no stranger to."

"Waste not your time," exclaimed the inquisitor sternly, "in making idle conjectures upon our conduct; but do you know for what you are summoned here?"

"No," replied Matilda.

"Swear that you know not for what crime you are here imprisoned," said the inquisitor.

Matilda took the oath required. As she spoke, a

dewy sweat burst from her brow, and her limbs were convulsed by the extreme of horror, yet the expression of her countenance was changed not.

"What crime have you committed which might subject you to the notice of this tribunal?" demanded he, in a determined tone of voice.

Matilda gave no answer, save a smile of exulting scorn. She fixed her regards upon the inquisitor: her dark eyes flashed fiercely, but she spoke not.

"Answer me," exclaimed he, "what to confess might save both of us needless trouble."

Matilda answered not, but gazed in silence upon the inquisitor's countenance.

He stamped thrice—four officials rushed in, and stood at some distance from Matilda.

"I am unwilling," said the inquisitor, "to treat a female of high birth with indignity; but if you confess not instantly, my duty will not permit me to withhold the question."

A deeper expression of contempt shaded Matilda's beautiful countenance: she frowned, but answered not.

"You will persist in this foolish obstinacy?" exclaimed the inquisitor.—"Officials, do your duty."

Instantly the four, who till now had stood in the back-

ground, rushed forwards: they seized Matilda, and bore her into the obscurity of the apartment.

Her dishevelled ringlets floated in negligent luxuriance over her alabaster bosom: her eyes, the contemptuous glance of which had now given way to a confused expression of alarm, were almost closed; and her symmetrical form, as borne away by the four officials, looked interestingly lovely.

The other inquisitor, who, till now, busied by the papers which lay before him, had heeded not Matilda's examination, raised his eyes, and beholding the form of a female, with a commanding tone of voice, called to the officials to stop.

Submissively they obeyed his order.—Matilda, released from the fell hands of these relentless ministers of justice, advanced to the table.

Her extreme beauty softened the inquisitor who had spoken last. He little thought that, under a form so celestial, so interesting, lurked a heart depraved, vicious as a demon's.

He therefore mildly addressed her; and telling her that, on some future day, her examination would be renewed, committed her to the care of the officials, with orders to conduct her to an apartment better suited to her rank.

The chamber to which she followed the officials was spacious and well furnished, but large iron bars secured

the windows, which were high, and impossible to be forced.

Left again to solitude, again to her own gloomy thoughts—her retrospection but horror and despair—her hopes of futurity none—her fears many and horrible—Matilda's situation is better conceived than described.

Floating in wild confusion, the ideas which presented themselves to her imagination were too horrible for endurance.

Deprived, as she was, of all earthly happiness, fierce as had been her passion for Verezzi, the disappointment of which sublimed her brain to the most infuriate delirium of resistless horror, the wretched Matilda still shrunk at death—she shrunk at the punishment of those crimes, in whose perpetration no remorse had touched her soul, for which, even now, she repented not, but as they had deprived her of terrestrial enjoyments.

She thought upon the future state—she thought upon the arguments of Zastrozzi against the existence of a Deity: her inmost soul now acknowledged their falsehood, and she shuddered as she reflected that her condition was irretrievable.

Resistless horror revelled through her bosom: in an intensity of racking thought she rapidly paced the apartment; at last, overpowered, she sank upon a sofa.

At last the tumultuous passions, exhausted by their own violence, subsided: the storm, which so lately had agitated Matilda's soul, ceased; a serene calm succeeded, and sleep quickly overcame her faculties.

Confused visions flitted in Matilda's imagination whilst under the influence of sleep; at last they assumed a settled shape.

Strangely brilliant and silvery clouds seemed to flit before her sight: celestial music, enchanting as the harmony of the spheres, serened Matilda's soul, and, for an instant, her situation forgotten, she lay entranced.

On a sudden the music ceased; the azure concavity of heaven seemed to open at the zenith, and a being, whose countenance beamed with unutterable beneficence, descended.

It seemed to be clothed in a transparent robe of flowing silver: its eye scintillated with super-human brilliancy, whilst her dream, imitating reality almost to exactness, caused the entranced Matilda to suppose that it addressed her in these words:—

"Poor sinning Matilda! repent, it is not yet too late.—God's mercy is unbounded.—Repent! and thou mayest yet be saved."

[1] These words yet tingled in Matilda's ears; yet

[1] There are inverted commas here in the original.

were her eyes lifted. to heaven, as if following the visionary phantom who had addressed her in her dream, when, much confused, she arose from the sofa.

A dream so like reality made a strong impression upon Matilda's soul.

The ferocious passions, which so lately had battled fiercely in her bosom, were calmed: she lifted her eyes to heaven: they beamed with an expression of sincerest penitence; for sincerest penitence, at this moment, agonised whilst it calmed Matilda's soul.

"God of mercy! God of heaven!" exclaimed Matilda; "my sins are many and horrible, but I repent."

Matilda knew not how to pray; but God, who from the height of heaven penetrates the inmost thoughts of terrestrial hearts, heard the outcast sinner, as in tears of true and agonising repentance she knelt before him.

She despaired no longer—She confided in the beneficence of her Creator; and, in the hour of adversity, when the firmest heart must tremble at his power, no longer a hardened sinner, demanded mercy. And mercy, by the All-benevolent of heaven, is never refused to those who humbly, yet trusting in his goodness, ask it.

Matilda's soul was filled with a celestial tranquillity.

She remained upon her knees in mute and fervent thought: she prayed; and, with trembling, asked forgiveness of her Creator.

No longer did that agony of despair torture her bosom. True, she was ill at ease: remorse for her crimes deeply affected her; and though her hopes of salvation were great, her belief in God and a future state firm, the heavy sighs which burst from her bosom, showed that the arrows of repentance had penetrated deeply.

Several days passed away, during which the conflicting passions of Matilda's soul, conquered by penitence, were mellowed into a fixed and quiet depression.

CHAPTER XVII.

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

HORACE.

AT last the day arrived, when, exposed to a public trial, Matilda was conducted to the tribunal of il consiglio di dieci.

The inquisitors were not, as before, at a table in the middle of the apartment; but a sort of throne was raised at one end, on which a stern-looking man, whom she had never seen before, sat: a great number of Venetians were assembled, and lined all sides of the apartment.

Many, in black vestments, were arranged behind the superior's throne; among whom Matilda recognised those who had before examined her.

Conducted by two officials, with a faltering step, a pallid cheek, and downcast eye, Matilda advanced to that part of the chamber where sat the superior.

The dishevelled ringlets of her hair floated unconfined

over her shoulders: her symmetrical and elegant form was enveloped in a thin white robe.

The expression of her sparkling eyes was downcast and humble; yet, seemingly unmoved by the scene before her, she remained in silence at the tribunal.

The curiosity and pity of every one, as they gazed on the loveliness of the beautiful culprit, was strongly excited.

"Who is she? who is she?" ran in inquiring whispers round the apartment.—No one could tell.

Again deep silence reigned—not a whisper interrupted the appalling calm.

At last the superior, in a sternly solemn voice, said—

"Matilda Contessa di Laurentini, you are here arraigned on the murder of La Marchesa di Strobazzo: canst thou deny it? canst thou prove to the contrary? My ears are open to conviction. Does no one speak for the accused?"

He ceased: uninterrupted silence reigned. Again he was about—again, with a look of detestation and horror, he had fixed his penetrating eye upon the trembling Matilda, and had unclosed his mouth to utter the fatal sentence, when his attention was arrested by a man who rushed from the crowd, and exclaimed, in a hurried tone—

"La Contessa di Laurentini is innocent."

"Who are you, who dare assert that?" exclaimed the superior, with an air of doubt.

"I am," answered he, "Ferdinand Zeilnitz, a German, the servant of La Contessa di Laurentini, and I dare assert that she is innocent."

"Your proof," exclaimed the superior, with a severe frown.

"It was late," answered Ferdinand, "when I entered the apartment, and then I beheld two bleeding bodies, and La Contessa di Laurentini, who lay bereft of sense on the sofa."

"Stop!" exclaimed the superior.

Ferdinand obeyed.

The superior whispered to one in black vestments, and soon four officials entered, bearing on their shoulders an open coffin.

The superior pointed to the ground: the officials deposited their burden, and produced, to the terror-struck eyes of the gazing multitude, Julia, the lovely Julia, covered with innumerable and ghastly gashes.

All present uttered a cry of terror—all started, shocked and amazed, from the horrible sight; yet some, recovering themselves, gazed at the celestial loveliness of the poor

victim to revenge, which, unsubdued by death, still shone from her placid features.

A deep-drawn sigh heaved Matilda's bosom; tears, spite of all her firmness, rushed into her eyes; and she had nearly fainted with dizzy horror; but, overcoming it, and collecting all her fortitude, she advanced towards the corse of her rival, and, in the numerous wounds which covered it, saw the fiat of her future destiny.

She still gazed on it—a deep silence reigned—not one of the spectators, so interested were they, uttered a single word—not a whisper was heard through the spacious apartment.

"Stand off! guilt-stained, relentless woman," at last exclaimed the superior fiercely: "is it not enough that you have persecuted, through life, the wretched female who lies before you—murdered by you? Cease, therefore, to gaze on her with looks as if your vengeance was yet insatiated. But retire, wretch: officials, take her into your custody; meanwhile, bring the other prisoner."

Two officials rushed forward, and led Matilda to some distance from the tribunal; four others entered, leading a man of towering height and majestic figure. The heavy chains with which his legs were bound, rattled as he advanced.

Matilda raised her eyes—Zastrozzi stood before her.

She rushed forwards—the officials stood unmoved.

"Oh, Zastrozzi!" she exclaimed—"dreadful, wicked has been the tenour of our life; base, ignominious, will be its termination: unless we repent, fierce, horrible, may be the eternal torments which will rack us, ere four and twenty hours are elapsed. Repent then, Zastrozzi; repent! and as you have been my companion in apostasy to virtue, follow me likewise in dereliction of stubborn and determined wickedness."

This was pronounced in a low and faltering voice.

"Matilda," replied Zastrozzi, whilst a smile of contemptuous atheism played over his features—"Matilda, fear not: fate wills us to die: and I intend to meet death, to encounter annihilation, with tranquillity. Am I not convinced of the non-existence of a Deity? am I not convinced that death will but render this soul more free, more unfettered? Why need I then shudder at death? why need any one, whose mind has risen above the shackles of prejudice, the errors of a false and injurious superstition."

Here the superior interposed, and declared he could allow private conversation no longer.

Quitting Matilda, therefore, Zastrozzi, unappalled by the awful scene before him, unshaken by the near approach of agonising death, which he now fully believed he was about to suffer, advanced towards the superior's throne.

Every one gazed on the lofty stature of Zastrozzi, and

admired his dignified mien and dauntless composure, even more than they had the beauty of Matilda.

Every one gazed in silence, and expected that some extraordinary charge would be brought against him.

The name of Zastrozzi, pronounced by the superior, had already broken the silence, when the culprit, gazing disdainfully on his judge, told him to be silent, for he would spare him much needless trouble.

"I am a murderer," exclaimed Zastrozzi; "I deny it not: I buried my dagger in the heart of him who injured me; but the motives which led me to be an assassin were at once excellent and meritorious; for I swore, at a loved mother's death-bed, to revenge her betrayer's falsehood.

"Think you, that whilst I perpetrated the deed I feared the punishment? or whilst I revenged a parent's cause, that the futile torments which I am doomed to suffer here, had any weight in my determination? No —no. If the vile deceiver, who brought my spotless mother to a tomb of misery, fell beneath the dagger of one who swore to revenge her—if I sent him to another world, who destroyed the peace of one I loved more than myself in this, am I to be blamed?"

Zastrozzi ceased, and, with an expression of scornful triumph, folded his arms.

"Go on!" exclaimed the superior.

"Go on! go on!" echoed from every part of the immense apartment.

He looked around him. His manner awed the tumultuous multitude; and, in uninterrupted silence, the spectators gazed upon the unappalled Zastrozzi, who, towering as a demi-god, stood in the midst.

"Am I then called upon," said he, "to disclose things which bring painful remembrances to my mind? Ah, how painful! But no matter; you shall know the name of him who fell beneath this arm: you shall know him, whose memory, even now, I detest more than I can express. I care not who knows my actions, convinced as I am, and convinced to all eternity as I shall be, of their rectitude.—Know, then, that Olivia Zastrozzi was my mother; a woman in whom every virtue, every amiable and excellent quality, I firmly believe to have been centred.

"The father of him who by my arts committed suicide but six days ago in La Contessa di Laurentini's mansion, took advantage of a moment of weakness, and disgraced her who bore me. He swore with the most sacred oaths to marry her—but he was false.

"My mother soon brought me into the world—the seducer married another; and when the destitute Olivia begged a pittance to keep her from starving, her proud betrayer spurned her from his door, and tauntingly bade her exercise her profession.—The crime I committed with thee, perjured one! exclaimed my mother as she left his door, shall be my last!—and, by heavens! she acted nobly. A victim to falsehood, she sank early to the

tomb, and, ere her thirtieth year, she died—her spotless soul fled to eternal happiness.—Never shall I forget, though but fourteen when she died—never shall I forget her last commands.—My son, said she, my Pietrino, revenge my wrongs—revenge them on the perjured Verezzi—revenge them on his progeny for ever!

"And, by heaven! I think I have revenged them. Ere I was twenty-four, the false villain, though surrounded by seemingly impenetrable grandeur; though forgetful of the offence to punish which this arm was nerved, sank beneath my dagger. But I destroyed his *body* alone," added Zastrozzi, with a terrible look of insatiated vengeance: "time has taught me better: his son's *soul* is hell-doomed to all eternity: he destroyed himself; but my machinations, though unseen, effected his destruction.

"Matilda di Laurentini! Hah! why do you shudder? When, with repeated stabs, you destroyed her who now lies lifeless before you in her coffin, did you not reflect upon what must be your fate? You have enjoyed him whom you adored—you have even been married to him—and, for the space of more than a month, have tasted unutterable joys, and yet you are unwilling to pay the price of your happiness—by heavens I am not!" added he, bursting into a wild laugh.—"Ah! poor fool, Matilda, did you think it was from friendship I instructed you how to gain Verezzi?—No, no—it was revenge which induced me to enter into your schemes with zeal; which induced me to lead her, whose lifeless form lies yonder, to your house, foreseeing the effect it would have upon the strong passions of your husband.

"And now," added Zastrozzi, "I have been candid with you. Judge, pass your sentence—but I know my doom; and, instead of horror, experience some degree of satisfaction at the arrival of death, since all I have to do on earth is completed."

Zastrozzi ceased; and, unappalled, fixed his expressive gaze upon the superior.

Surprised at Zastrozzi's firmness, and shocked at the crimes of which he had made so unequivocal an avowal, the superior turned away in horror.

Still Zastrozzi stood unmoved, and fearlessly awaited the fiat of his destiny.

The superior whispered to one in black vestments. Four officials rushed in, and placed Zastrozzi on the rack.

Even whilst writhing under the agony of almost insupportable torture his nerves were stretched, Zastrozzi's firmness failed him not; but, upon his soul-illumined countenance, played a smile of most disdainful scorn; and with a wild convulsive laugh of exulting revenge—he died.

THE END.

[OF ZASTROZZI.]

The imprint of *Zastrozzi* is as follows:—

Printed by S. Hamilton, Weybridge.

ST. IRVYNE;

OR,

THE ROSICRUCIAN.

[In the letter of the 1st of April, 1810, mentioned at p. 2 of this volume, Shelley says that, if some one whom he designates as *Jock* (probably Robinson, the publisher of *Zastrozzi*) will not give him "a devil of a price" for his poem "and at least 60*l*." for his "New Romance in three volumes, the dog shall not have them." Perhaps we may pretty safely take this as a reference to *St. Irvyne*, and conclude that Mr. Robinson did not see his way to giving 60*l*. for the book ultimately published by Stockdale under circumstances discovered by Mr. Garnett in *Stockdale's Budget*, and made the subject of an article, *Shelley in Pall Mall*, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for June, 1860. From one of Shelley's letters in that article, it seems that Stockdale was at pains to "fit *St. Irvyne* for the press," Shelley being "by no means a good hand at correction." On the 2nd of December, 1810, Shelley wrote asking "When *does* 'St. Irvyne' come out?"; on the 18th of the same month he had seen Stockdale's advertisement of it; on the 20th he wrote to Hogg (Life, vol. I., p. 145), "*St. Irvyne* is come out; it is sent to you at Mr. Dayrell's; you can get one in London by mentioning my name to Stockdale"; on the 28th he wrote again (ib., p. 151), "Your discrimination of that chapter is more just than the praises which you bestow on so unconnected a thing as the romance taken collectively"; and on the 11th of January, 1811, he had already had the bill for the printing, and was writing to Stockdale to request that a copy of the book might be sent to Harriet Westbrook; and Mr. MacCarthy found in *The Times* for the 26th of January and 2nd of February, 1811, an advertisement of *St. Irvyne* opening with "*The University Romance.—This day is published, price only 5s.*" *St. Irvyne* is a 12mo. volume consisting of fly-title, *St. Irvyne; or, the Rosicrucian* (as on the other side), with imprint "S. Gosnell, Printer, Little Queen Street, London," at foot of the back page, title-page as given opposite, and 236 pages of text, with head-lines throughout, *St. Irvyne; or*, on the left-hand, *the Rosicrucian* on the right. There seems to have been a remainder of the book unsold in 1822; for copies are frequently found made up from the original sheets, with a fresh title-page, worded precisely as the original title-page is worded, but with the date 1822. *St. Irvyne*, as well as *Zastrozzi*, was reprinted in *The Romancist* as the work of Shelley (in No. 60, 1840).—H. B. F.]

ST. IRVYNE;

OR,

THE ROSICRUCIAN:

A ROMANCE.

BY

A GENTLEMAN

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. J. STOCKDALE,
41, PALL MALL.

1811.

ST. IRVYNE;

OR,

THE ROSICRUCIAN.

CHAP. I.

Red thunder-clouds, borne on the wings of the midnight whirlwind, floated, at fits, athwart the crimson-coloured orbit of the moon; the rising fierceness of the blast sighed through the stunted shrubs, which, bending before its violence, inclined towards the rocks whereon they grew: over the blackened expanse of heaven, at intervals, was spread the blue lightning's flash; it played upon the granite heights, and, with momentary brilliancy, disclosed the terrific scenery of the Alps, whose gigantic and misshapen[1] summits, reddened by the transitory moon-beam, were crossed by black fleeting fragments of the tempest-clouds. The rain, in big drops, began to descend, and the thunder-peals, with louder and more deafening crash, to shake the zenith, till the long-protracted war; echoing from cavern to cavern, died, in indistinct murmurs, amidst the far-extended chain of mountains. In this scene, then, at this horrible and tempestuous hour, without one existent earthly being whom he might claim

[1] In the original, *mishapen*, as in *Zastrozzi*.

as friend, without one resource to which he might fly as an asylum from the horrors of neglect and poverty, stood Wolfstein;—he gazed upon the conflicting elements; his youthful figure reclined against a jutting granite rock; he cursed his wayward destiny, and implored the Almighty of Heaven to permit the thunderbolt, with crash terrific and exterminating, to descend upon his head, that a being useless to himself and to society might no longer, by his existence, mock Him who ne'er made aught in vain. "And what so horrible crimes have I committed," exclaimed Wolfstein, driven to impiety by desperation, "what crimes which merit punishment like this? What, what is death?—Ah, dissolution! thy pang is blunted by the hard hand of long-protracted suffering—suffering unspeakable, indescribable!" As thus he spoke, a more terrific paroxysm of excessive despair revelled through every vein; his brain swam around in wild confusion, and, rendered delirious by excess of misery, he started from his flinty seat, and swiftly hastened towards the precipice, which yawned widely beneath his feet. "For what then should I longer drag on the galling chain of existence?" cried Wolfstein; and his impious expression was borne onwards by the hot and sulphurous thunderblast.

The midnight meteors danced above the gulf upon which Wolfstein wistfully gazed. Palpable, impenetrable darkness seemed to hang upon it; impenetrable even by the flaming thunderbolt. "Into this then shall I plunge myself?" soliloquized the wretched outcast, "and by one rash act endanger, perhaps, eternal happiness;—deliver myself up, perhaps, to the anticipation and experience of never-ending torments? Art thou the God then, the

Creator of the universe, whom canting monks call the God of mercy and forgiveness, and sufferest thou thy creatures to become the victims of tortures such as fate has inflicted on me?—Oh! God, take my soul; why should I longer live?" Thus having spoken, he sank on the rocky bosom of the mountains. Yet, unheeding the exclamations of the maddened Wolfstein, fiercer raged the tempest. The battling elements, in wild confusion, seemed to threaten nature's dissolution; the ferocious thunderbolt, with impetuous violence, danced upon the mountains, and, collecting more terrific strength, severed gigantic rocks from their else eternal basements; the masses, with sound more frightful than the bursting thunder-peal, dashed towards the valley below. Horror and desolation marked their track. The mountain-rills, swoln by the waters of the sky, dashed with direr impetuosity from the Alpine summits; their foaming waters were hidden in the darkness of midnight, or only became visible when the momentary scintillations of the lightning rested on their whitened waves. Fiercer still than nature's wildest uproar were the feelings of Wolfstein's bosom; his frame, at last, conquered by the conflicting passions of his soul, no longer was adequate to sustain the unequal contest, but sank to the earth. His brain swam wildly, and he lay entranced in total insensibility.

What torches are those that dispel the distant darkness of midnight, and gleam, like meteors, athwart the blackness of the tempest? They throw a wavering light over the thickness of the storm: they wind along the mountains: they pass the hollow vallies. Hark! the howling of the blast has ceased,—the thunderbolts have dispersed, but yet reigns darkness. Distant sounds of song are borne

on the breeze: the sounds approach. A low bier holds the remains of one whose soul is floating in the regions of eternity: a black pall covers him. Monks support the lifeless clay: others precede, bearing torches, and chanting a requiem for the salvation of the departed one. They hasten towards the convent of the valley, there to deposit the lifeless limbs of one who has explored the frightful path of eternity before them. And now they had arrived where lay Wolfstein: "Alas!" said one of the monks, "there reclines a wretched traveller. He is dead; murdered, doubtlessly, by the fell bandits who infest these wild recesses."

They raised from the earth his form: yet his bosom throbbed with the tide of life: returning animation once more illumed his eye: he started on his feet, and wildly inquired why they had awakened him from that slumber which he had hoped to have been eternal. Unconnected were his expressions, strange and impetuous the fire darting from his restless eyeballs. At length, the monks succeeded in calming the desperate tumultuousness of his bosom, calming at least in some degree; for he accepted their proffered tenders of a lodging, and essayed to lull to sleep, for a while, the horrible idea of dereliction which pressed upon his loaded brain.

While thus they stood, loud shouts rent the air, and, before Wolfstein and the monks could well collect their scattered faculties, they found that a troop of Alpine bandits had surrounded them. Trembling, from apprehension, the monks fled every way. None, however, could escape. "What! old grey-beards," cried one of the robbers, "do you suppose that we will permit you to evade us: you who feed upon the strength of the country,

in idleness and luxury, and have compelled many of our noble fellows, who otherwise would have been ornaments to their country in peace, thunderbolts to their enemies in war, to seek precarious subsistence as Alpine bandits? If you wish for mercy, therefore, deliver unhesitatingly your joint riches." The robbers then despoiled the monks of whatever they might adventitiously have taken with them, and, turning to Wolfstein, the apparent chieftain told him to yield his money likewise. Unappalled, Wolfstein advanced towards him. The chief held a torch; its red beams disclosed the expression of stern severity and unyielding loftiness which sate upon the brow of Wolfstein. "Bandit!" he answered fearlessly, "I have none,—no money—no hope—no friends; nor do I care for existence! Now judge if such a man be a fit victim for fear! No! I never trembled!"

A ray of pleasure gleamed in the countenance of the bandit as Wolfstein spoke. Grief, in inerasible traces, sate deeply implanted on the front of the outcast. At last, the chief, advancing to Wolfstein, who stood at some little distance, said, "My companions think that so noble a fellow as you appear to be, would be no unworthy member of our society; and, by Heaven, I am of their opinion. Are you willing to become one of us?"

Wolfstein's dark gaze was fixed upon the ground: his contracted eyebrow evinced deep thought: he started from his reverie, and, without hesitation, consented to their proposal.

Long was it past the hour of midnight when the banditti troop, with their newly-acquired associate,

advanced along the pathless Alps. The red glare of the torches which each held, tinged the rocks and pine-trees, through woods of which they occasionally passed, and alone dissipated the darkness of night. Now had they arrived at the summit of a wild and rocky precipice, but the base indeed of another which mingled its far-seen and gigantic outline with the clouds of heaven. A door, which before had appeared part of the solid rock, flew open at the chieftain's touch, and the whole party advanced into the spacious cavern. Over the walls of the lengthened passages putrefaction had spread a bluish clamminess; damps hung around, and, at intervals, almost extinguished the torches, whose glare was scarcely sufficient to dissipate the impenetrable obscurity. After many devious windings they advanced into the body of the cavern: it was spacious and lofty. A blazing wood fire threw its dubious rays upon the misshapen[1] and ill-carved walls. Lamps suspended from the roof, dispersed the subterranean gloom, not so completely, however, but that ill-defined shades lurked in the arched distances, whose hollow recesses led to different apartments.

The gang had sate down in the midst of the cavern to supper, which a female, whose former loveliness had left scarce any traces on her cheek, had prepared. The most exquisite and expensive wines apologized for the rusticity of the rest of the entertainment, and induced freedom of conversation, and wild boisterous merriment, which reigned until the bandits, overcome by the fumes of the wine which they had drank, sank to sleep.

[1] In the original, *mishapen*, as before.

Wolfstein, left again to solitude and silence, reclining on his mat in a corner of the cavern, retraced, in mental, sorrowing review, the past events of his life: ah! that eventful existence whose fate had dragged the heir of a wealthy potentate in Germany from the lap of luxury and indulgence, to become a vile associate of viler bandits, in the wild and trackless deserts of the Alps. Around their dwelling, lofty inaccessible acclivities reared their barren summits; they echoed to no sound save the wild hoot of the night-raven, or the impatient yelling of the vulture, which hovered on the blast in quest of scanty sustenance. These were the scenes without: noisy revelry and tumultuous riot reigned within. The mirth of the bandits appeared to arise independently of themselves: their hearts were void and dreary, Wolfstein's limbs pillowed on the flinty bosom of the earth: those limbs which had been wont to recline on the softest, the most luxurious sofas. Driven from his native country by an event which imposed upon him an insuperable barrier to ever again returning thither, possessing no friends, not having one single resource from which he might obtain support, where could the wretch, the exile, seek for an asylum but with those whose fortunes, expectations, and characters were desperate, and marked as darkly, by fate, as his own?

Time fled, and each succeeding day inured Wolfstein more and more to the idea of depriving his fellow-creatures of their possessions. In a short space of time the high-souled and noble Wolfstein, though still high-souled and noble, became an experienced bandit. His magnanimity and courage, even whilst surrounded by the most threatening dangers, and the unappalled expression

of countenance with which he defied the dart of death, endeared him to the robbers: whilst with him they all asserted that they felt, as it were, instinctively impelled to deeds of horror and danger, which, otherwise, must have remained unattempted even by the boldest. His was every daring expedition, his the scheme which demanded depth of judgment and promptness of execution. Often, whilst at midnight the band lurked perhaps beneath the overhanging rocks, which were gloomily impended above them, in the midst, perhaps, of one of those horrible tempests whereby the air, in those Alpine regions, is so frequently convulsed, would the countenance of the bandits betray some slight shade of alarm and awe; but that of Wolfstein was fixed, unchanged, by any variation of scenery or action. One day it was when the chief communicated to the banditti, notice which he had received by means of spies, that an Italian Count of immense wealth was journeying from Paris to his native country, and, at a late hour the following evening, would pass the Alps near this place; "They have but few attendants," added he, "and those few will not come this way; the postillion is in our interest, and the horses are to be overcome with fatigue when they approach the destined spot: you understand."

The evening came. "I," said Wolfstein, "will roam into the country, but will return before the arrival of our wealthy victim." Thus saying, he left the cavern, and wandered out amidst the mountains.

It was autumn. The mountain-tops, the scattered oaks which occasionally waved their lightning-blasted heads on the summits of the far-seen piles of rock, were

gilded by the setting glory of the sun; the trees, yellowed by the waning year, reflected a glowing teint from their thick foliage; and the dark pine-groves which were stretched half way up the mountain sides, added a more deepened gloom to the shades of evening, which already began to gather rapidly above the scenery.

It was at this dark and silent hour, that Wolfstein, unheeding the surrounding objects,—objects which might have touched with awe, or heightened to devotion, any other breast,—wandered alone—pensively he wandered—dark images for futurity possessed his soul: he shuddered when he reflected upon what had passed; nor was his present situation calculated to satisfy a mind eagerly panting for liberty and independence. Conscience too, awakened conscience, upbraided him for the life which he had selected, and, with silent whisperings, stung his soul to madness. Oppressed by thoughts such as these, Wolfstein yet proceeded, forgetful that he was to return before the arrival of their destined victim—forgetful indeed was he of every external existence; and absorbed in himself, with arms folded, and eyes fixed upon the earth, he yet advanced. At last he sank on a mossy bank, and, guided by the impulse of the moment, inscribed on a tablet the following lines; for the inaccuracy of which, the perturbation of him who wrote them, may account; he thought of past times while he marked the paper with—

" 'Twas dead of the night, when I sat in my dwelling;
One glimmering lamp was expiring and low;
Around, the dark tide of the tempest was swelling,
Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling,—
They bodingly presag'd destruction and woe.

'Twas then that I started!—the wild storm was howling,
Nought was seen, save the lightning, which danc'd in the sky;
Above me, the crash of the thunder was rolling,
And low, chilling murmurs, the blast wafted by.

My heart sank within me—unheeded the war
Of the battling clouds, on the mountain-tops, broke;—
Unheeded the thunder-peal crash'd in mine ear—
This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to fear;
But conscience in low, noiseless whispering spoke.

'Twas then that her form on the whirlwind upholding,
The ghost of the murder'd Victoria strode;
In her right hand, a shadowy shroud she was holding,
She swiftly advanc'd to my lonesome abode.

I wildly then call'd on the tempest to bear me——"

Overcome by the wild retrospection of ideal horror, which these swiftly-written lines excited in his soul, Wolfstein tore the paper, on which he had written them, to pieces, and scattered them about him. He arose from his recumbent posture, and again advanced through the forest. Not far had he proceeded, ere a mingled murmur broke upon the silence of night—it was the sound of human voices. An event so unusual in these solitudes, excited Wolfstein's momentary surprise; he started, and looking around him, essayed to discover whence those sounds proceeded.—What was the astonishment of Wolfstein, when he found that a detached party, who had been sent in pursuit of the Count, had actually overtaken him, and, at this instant, were dragging from the carriage the almost lifeless form of a female, whose light symmetrical figure, as it leant on the muscular frame of the robber who supported it, afforded a most striking contrast.—They had, before his arrival, plundered the Count of all his riches, and, enraged at the spirited defence which he had made, had inhumanly murdered him, and cast his

lifeless body adown the yawning precipice. Transfixed by a jutting point of granite rock, it remained there to be devoured by the ravens. Wolfstein joined the banditti; and, although he could not recall the deed, lamented the wanton cruelty which had been practised upon the Count. As for the female, whose grace and loveliness made so strong an impression upon him, he demanded that every soothing attention should be paid to her, and his desire was enforced by the commands of the chief, whose dark eye wandered wildly over the beauties of the lovely Megalena de Metastasio, as if he had secretly destined them for himself.

At last they arrived at the cavern; every resource which the cavern of a gang of lawless and desperate villains might afford, was brought forward to restore the fainted Megalena to life: she soon recovered—she slowly opened her eyes, and started with surprise to behold herself surrounded by a rough set of desperadoes, and the gloomy walls of the cavern, upon which darkness hung, awfully visible. Near her sate a female, whose darkened expression of countenance seemed perfectly to correspond with the horror prevalent throughout the cavern; her face, though bearing the marks of an undeniable expression of familiarity with wretchedness, had some slight remains of beauty.

It was long past midnight when each of the robbers withdrew to repose. But his mind was too much occupied by the events of the evening to allow the unhappy Wolfstein to find quiet;—at an early hour he arose from his sleepless couch, to inhale the morning breeze. The sun had but just risen; the scene was beautiful; every

thing was still, and seemed to favour that reflection, which even propinquity to his abandoned associates imposed no indefinably insuperable bar to. In spite of his attempts to think upon other subjects, the image of the fair Megalena floated in his mind. Her loveliness had made too deep an impression on it to be easily removed; and the hapless Wolfstein, ever the victim of impulsive feeling, found himself bound to her by ties, more lasting than he had now conceived the transitory tyranny of woe could have imposed. For never had Wolfstein beheld so singularly beautiful a form;—her figure cast in the mould of most exact symmetry; her blue and love-beaming eyes, from which occasionally emanated a wild expression, seemingly almost superhuman; and the auburn hair which hung in unconfined tresses down her damask cheek—formed a resistless *tout ensemble.*

Heedless of every external object, Wolfstein long wandered.—The protracted sound of the bandits' horn struck at last upon his ear, and aroused him from his reverie. On his return to the cavern, the robbers were assembled at their meal; the chief regarded him with marked and jealous surprise as he entered, but made no remark. They then discussed their uninteresting and monotonous topics, and the meal being ended, each villain departed on his different business.

Megalena, finding herself alone with Agnes (the only woman, save herself, who was in the cavern, and who served as an attendant on the robbers), essayed, by the most humble entreaties and supplications, to excite pity in her breast: she conjured her to explain the cause for

which she was thus imprisoned, and wildly inquired for her father. The guilt-bronzed brow of Agnes was contracted by a sullen and malicious frown: it was the only reply which the inhuman female deigned to return. After a pause, however, she said, "Thou thinkest thyself my superior, proud girl; but time may render us equals. —Submit to that, and you may live on the same terms as I do."

There appeared to lurk a meaning in these words, which Megalena found herself incompetent to develope; she answered not, therefore, and suffered Agnes to depart unquestioned. The wretched Megalena, a prey to despair and terror, endeavoured to revolve in her mind the events which had brought her to this spot, but an unconnected stream of ideas pressed upon her brain. The sole light in her cell was that of a dismal lamp, which, by its uncertain flickering, only dissipated the almost palpable obscurity, in a sufficient degree more assuredly to point out the circumambient horrors. She gazed wistfully around, to see if there were any outlet; none there was, save the door whereby Agnes had entered, which was strongly barred on the outside. In despair she threw herself on the wretched pallet.—"For what cause, then, am I thus entombed alive?" soliloquized the hapless Megalena; "would it not be preferable at once to annihilate the spark of life which burns but faintly within my bosom?—O my father! where art thou? Thy tombless corse, perhaps, is torn into a thousand pieces by the fury of the mountain cataract.—Little didst thou presage misfortunes such as these!—little didst thou suppose that our last journey would have caused thy immature dissolution—my infamy and

misery, not to end but with my hapless existence!—Here there is none to comfort me, none to participate my miseries!" Thus speaking, overcome by a paroxysm of emotion, she sank on the bed, and bedewed her fair face with tears.

Whilst, oppressed by painful retrospection, the outcast orphan was yet kneeling, Agnes entered, and, not even noticing her distress, bade her prepare to come to the banquet where the troop of bandits was assembled. In silence, along the vaulted and gloomy passages, she followed her conductress, from whose stern and forbidding gaze her nature shrunk back enhorrored, till they reached that apartment of the cavern where the revelry waited but for her arrival to commence. On her entering, Cavigni, the chief, led her to a seat on his right hand, and paid her every attention which his froward nature could stoop to exercise towards a female: she received his civilities with apparent complacency; but her eye was frequently fascinated, as it were, towards the youthful Wolfstein, who had caught her attention the evening before. His countenance, spite of the shade of woe with which the hard hand of suffering had marked it, was engaging and beautiful; not that beauty which may be freely acknowledged, but inwardly confessed by every beholder with sensations penetrating and resistless; his figure majestic and lofty, and the fire which flashed from his expressive eye, indefinably to herself, penetrated the inmost soul of the isolated Megalena. Wolfstein regarded Cavigni with indignation and envy; and, though almost ignorant himself of the dreadful purpose of his soul, resolved in his own mind an horrible deed. Cavigni was enraptured with the beauty of Megalena, and

secretly vowed that no pains should be spared to gain to himself the possession of an object so lovely. The anticipated delight of gratified voluptuousness revelled in every vein, as he gazed upon her; his eye flashed with a triumphant expression of lawless love, yet he determined to defer the hour of his happiness till he might enjoy more free, unrestrained delight, with his adored fair one. She gazed on the chief, however, with an ill-concealed aversion; his dark expression of countenance, the haughty severity, and contemptuous frown, which habitually sate on his brow, invited not, but rather repelled a reciprocality of affection, which the haughty chief, after his own attachment, entertained not the most distant doubt of. He was, notwithstanding, conscious of her coldness, but attributing it to virgin modesty, or to the novel situation into which she had suddenly been thrown, paid her every attention; nor did he omit to promise her every little comfort which might induce her to regard him with esteem. Still, though veiled beneath the most artful dissimulation, did the fair Megalena pant ardently for liberty—for, oh! liberty is sweet, sweeter even than all the other pleasures of life, to full satiety, without it.

Cavigni essayed, by every art, to gain her over to his desires; but Megalena, regarding him with aversion, answered with an haughtiness which she was unable to conceal, and which his proud spirit might ill brook. Cavigni could not disguise the vexation which he felt, when, increased by resistance, Megalena's dislike towards him remained no longer a secret: "Megalena," said he, at last, "fair girl, thou shalt be mine—we will be wedded to-morrow, if you think the bands of love not sufficiently forcible to unite us."

"No bands shall ever unite me to you!" exclaimed Megalena. "Even though the grave were to yawn beneath my feet, I would willingly precipitate myself into its gulf, if the alternative of that, or an union with you, were proposed to me."

Rage swelled Cavigni's bosom almost to bursting—the conflicting passions of his soul were too tumultuous for utterance;—in an hurried tone, he commanded Agnes to show Megalena to her cell: she obeyed, and they both quitted the apartment.

Wolfstein's soul, sublimed by the most infuriate paroxysms of contending emotions, battled wildly. His countenance retained, however, but one expression,—it was of dark and deliberate revenge. His stern eye was fixed upon Cavigni;—he decided at this instant to perpetrate the deed he had resolved on. Leaving his seat, he intimated his intention of quitting the cavern for an instant.

Cavigni had just filled his goblet—Wolfstein, as he passed, dexterously threw a little white powder into the wine of the chief.

When Wolfstein returned, Cavigni had not yet quaffed the deadly draught: rising, therefore, he exclaimed aloud, "Fill your goblets, all." Every one obeyed, and sat in expectation of the toast which he was about to propose.

"Let us drink," he exclaimed, "to the health of the chieftain's bride—let us drink to their mutual happiness."

A smile of pleasure irradiated the countenance of the chief:—that he whom he had supposed to be a dangerous rival, should thus publicly forego any claim to the affections of Megalena, was indeed pleasure.

"Health and mutual happiness to the chieftain and his bride!" re-echoed from every part of the table.

Cavigni raised the goblet to his lips: he was about to quaff the tide of death, when Ginotti, one of the robbers who sat next to him, upreared his arm, and dashed the cup of destruction to the earth. A silence, as if in expectation of some terrible event, reigned throughout the cavern.

Wolfstein turned his eyes towards the chief;—the dark and mysterious gaze of Ginotti arrested his wandering eyeball; its expression was too marked to be misunderstood;—he trembled in his inmost soul, but his countenance yet retained its unchangeable expression. Ginotti spoke not, nor willed he to assign any reason for his extraordinary conduct; the circumstance was shortly forgotten, and the revelry went on undisturbed by any other event.

Ginotti was one of the boldest of the robbers; he was the distinguished favourite of the chief, and, although mysterious and reserved, his society was courted with more eagerness, than such qualities might, abstractedly considered, appear to deserve. None knew his history—*that* he concealed within the deepest recesses of his bosom; nor could the most suppliant entreaties, or threats of the most horrible punishments, have wrested from him

one particular concerning it. Never had he once thrown off the mysterious mask, beneath which his character was veiled, since he had become an associate of the band. In vain the chief required him to assign some reason for his late extravagant conduct; he said it was mere accident, but with an air, which more than convinced every one, that something lurked behind which yet remained unknown. Such, however, was their respect for Ginotti, that the occurrence passed almost without a comment.

Long now had the hour of midnight gone by, and the bandits had retired to repose. Wolfstein retired too to his couch, but sleep closed not his eyelids; his bosom was a scene of the wildest anarchy; the conflicting passions revelled dreadfully in his burning brain:—love, maddening, excessive, unaccountable idolatry, as it were, which possessed him for Megalena, urged him on to the commission of deeds which conscience represented as beyond measure wicked, and which Ginotti's glance convinced him were by no means unsuspected. Still so unbounded was his love for Megalena (madness rather than love), that it overbalanced every other consideration, and his unappalled soul resolved to persevere in its determination even to destruction!

Cavigni's commands respecting Megalena had been obeyed:—the door of her cell was fastened, and the ferocious chief resolved to let her lie there till the suffering and confinement might subdue her to his will. Megalena endeavoured, by every means, to soften the obdurate heart of her attendant; at length, her mildness of manner induced Agnes to regard her with pity; and before she quitted the cell, they were so far reconciled to each other,

that they entered into a comparison of their mutual situations; and Agnes was about to relate to Megalena the circumstances which had brought her to the cavern, when the fierce Cavigni entered, and, commanding Agnes to withdraw, said, "Well, proud girl, are you now in a better humour to return the favour with which your superior regards you?"

"No!" heroically answered Megalena.

"Then," rejoined the chief, "if within four-and-twenty hours you hold yourself not in readiness to return my love, force shall wrest the jewel from its casket." Thus having said, he abruptly quitted the cell.

So far had Wolfstein's proposed toast, at the banquet, gained on the unsuspecting ferociousness of Cavigni, that he accepted the former's artful tender of service, in the way of persuasion with Megalena, supposing, by Wolfstein's manner, that they had been cursorily acquainted before. Wolfstein, therefore, entered the apartment of Megalena.

At the sight of him Megalena arose from her recumbent posture, and hastened joyfully to meet him; for she remembered that Wolfstein had rescued her from the insults of the banditti, on the eventful evening which had subjected her to their control.

"Lovely, adored girl," he exclaimed, "short is my time: pardon, therefore, the abruptness of my address. The chief has sent me to persuade you to become united

to him; but I love you, I adore you to madness. I am not what I seem. Answer me!—time is short."

An indefinable sensation, unfelt before, swelled through the passion-quivering frame of Megalena. "Yes, yes," she cried, "I will—I love you———" At this instant the voice of Cavigni was heard in the passage. Wolfstein started from his knees, and pressing the fair hand presented to his lips with exulting ardour, departed hastily to give an account of his mission to the anxious Cavigni; who restrained himself in the passage without, and, slightly mistrusting Wolfstein, was about to advance to the door of the cell to listen to their conversation, when Wolfstein quitted Megalena.

Megalena, again in solitude, began to reflect upon the scenes which had been lately acted. She thought upon the words of Wolfstein, unconscious wherefore they were a balm to her mind: she reclined upon her wretched pallet. It was now night: her thoughts took a different turn; the melancholy wind sighing along the crevices of the cavern, and the dismal sound of rain which pattered fast, inspired mournful reflection. She thought of her father,—her beloved father;—a solitary wanderer on the face of the earth; or, most probably, thought she, his soul rests in death. Horrible idea! If the latter, she envied his fate; if the former, she even supposed it preferable to her present abode. She again thought of Wolfstein; she pondered on his last words:—an escape from the cavern: oh delightful idea! Again her thoughts recurred to her father: tears bedewed her cheeks; she took a pencil, and, actuated by the feelings of the moment, inscribed on the wall of her prison these lines:

Ghosts of the dead! have I not heard your yelling
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the blast,[1]
When o'er the dark ether the tempest is swelling,
And on eddying whirlwind the thunder-peal past?

For oft have I stood on the dark height of Jura,
Which frowns on the valley that opens beneath;
Oft have I brav'd the chill night-tempest's fury,
Whilst around me, I thought, echo'd murmurs of death.

And now, whilst the winds of the mountain are howling,
O father! thy voice seems to strike on mine ear;
In air whilst the tide of the night-storm is rolling,
It breaks on the pause of the elements' jar.

On the wing of the whirlwind which roars o'er the mountain
Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire who is dead;
On the mist of the tempest which hangs o'er the fountain,
Whilst a wreath of dark vapour encircles his head.

Here she paused, and, ashamed of the exuberance of her imagination, obliterated from the wall the characters which she had traced: the wind still howled dreadfully: in fearful anticipation of the morrow, she threw herself on the bed, and, in sleep, forgot the misfortunes which impended over her.

Meantime, the soul of Wolfstein was disturbed by ten thousand conflicting passions; revenge and disappointed love agonized his soul to madness; and he resolved to quench the rude feelings of his bosom in the blood of his

[1] It would be interesting to know whether, when Shelley was powerfully influencing Byron with the high thoughts and noble sentiments that contributed so largely to the greatness of some of "the Pilgrim's" works, either mind was ever for a moment conscious of this small debt on the other side of the account. Probably Shelley was too oblivious of *St. Irvyne*, and Byron too much ashamed of *Hours of Idleness*, for either poet mentally to collate these two lines with those in *Lachin y Gair* (*Hours of Idleness*, 1807, p. 130)—

Shades of the dead! have I not heard your voices
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale?

rival! But, again he thought of Ginotti; he thought of the mysterious intervention which his dark glances proved not to be accidental. To him it was an inexplicable mystery; which the more he reflected upon, the less able was he to unravel. He had mixed the poison, unseen, as he thought, by any one; certainly unseen by Ginotti, whose back was unconcernedly turned at the time. He planned, therefore, a second attempt, unawed by what had happened before, for the destruction of Cavigni, which he resolved to put into execution this night.

Before he had become an associate with the band of robbers, the conscience of Wolfstein was clear; clear, at least, from the commission of any wilful and deliberate crime: for, alas! an event almost too dreadful for narration, had compelled him to quit his native country, in indigence and disgrace. His courage was equal to his wickedness; his mind was unalienable from its purpose; and whatever his will might determine, his boldness would fearlessly execute, even though hell and destruction were to yawn beneath his feet, and essay to turn his unappalled soul from the accomplishment of his design. Such was the guilty Wolfstein; a disgraceful fugitive from his country, a vile associate of a band of robbers, and a murderer, at least in intent, if not in deed. He shrunk not at the commission of crimes; he was now the hardened villain; eternal damnation, tortures inconceivable on earth, awaited him. "Foolish, degrading idea!" he exclaimed, as it momentarily glanced through his mind; "am I worthy of the celestial Megalena, if I shrink at the price which it is necessary I should pay for her possession?" This idea banished every other feeling from

his heart; and, smothering the stings of conscience, a decided resolve of murder took possession of him—the determining, within himself, to destroy the very man who had given him an asylum, when driven to madness by the horrors of neglect and poverty. He stood in the night-storm on the mountains; he cursed the intervention of Ginotti, and secretly swore that nor heaven nor hell again should dash the goblet of destruction from the mouth of the detested Cavigni. The soul of Wolfstein too, insatiable in its desires, and panting for liberty, ill could brook the confinement of idea, which the cavern of the bandits must necessarily induce. He longed again to try his fortune; he longed to re-enter that world which he had never tried but once, and that indeed for a short time; sufficiently long, however, to blast his blooming hopes, and to graft on the stock, which otherwise might have produced virtue, the fatal seeds of vice.

CHAP. II.

The fiends of fate are heard to rave;
And the death-angel flaps his broad wing o'er the wave.

It was midnight; and all the robbers were assembled in the banquet-hall, amongst whom, bearing in his bosom a weight of premeditated crime, was Wolfstein; he sat by the chief. They discoursed on indifferent subjects; the sparkling goblet went round; loud laughter succeeded. The ruffians were rejoicing over some plunder which they had taken from a traveller, whom they had robbed of immense wealth; they had left his body a prey to the vultures of the mountains. The table groaned with the pressure of the feast. Hilarity reigned around: reiterated were the shouts of merriment and joy; if such could exist in a cavern of robbers.

It was long past midnight: another hour, and Megalena must be Cavigni's. This idea rendered Wolfstein callous to every sting of conscience; and he eagerly awaited an opportunity when he might, unperceived, infuse poison into the goblet of one who confided in him. Ginotti sat opposite to Wolfstein: his arms were folded, and his gaze rested fixedly upon the fearless countenance

of the murderer. Wolfstein shuddered when he beheld the brow of the mysterious Ginotti contracted, his marked features wrapped in inexplicable mystery.

All were now heated by wine, save the wily villain who destined murder; and the awe-inspiring Ginotti, whose reservedness and mystery, not even the hilarity of the present hour could dispel.

Conversation appearing to flag, Cavigni exclaimed, "Steindolph, you know some old German stories; cannot you tell one, to deceive the lagging hours?"

Steindolph was famed for his knowledge of metrical spectre tales, and the gang were frequently wont to hang delighted on the ghostly wonders which he related.

"Excuse, then, the mode of my telling it," said Steindolph, "and I will with pleasure. I learnt it whilst in Germany; my old grandmother taught it me, and I can repeat it as a ballad."—"Do, do," re-echoed from every part of the cavern.—Steindolph thus began:

BALLAD.

I.

The death-bell beats!—
The mountain repeats
The echoing sound of the knell;
And the dark monk now
Wraps the cowl round his brow,
As he sits in his lonely cell.

II.

And the cold hand of death
Chills his shuddering breath,
As he lists to the fearful lay
Which the ghosts of the sky,
As they sweep wildly by,
Sing to departed day.
And they sing of the hour
When the stern fates had power
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay.

III.

But that hour is past;
And that hour was the last
Of peace to the dark monk's brain.
Bitter tears, from his eyes, gush'd silent and fast;
And he strove to suppress them in vain.

IV.

Then his fair cross of gold he dash'd on the floor,
When the death-knell struck on his ear.
Delight is in store
For her evermore;
But for me is fate, horror, and fear.

V.

Then his eyes wildly roll'd,
When the death-bell toll'd,
And he rag'd in terrific woe.
And he stamp'd on the ground,—
But when ceas'd the sound
Tears again began to flow.

VI.

And the ice of despair
Chill'd the wild throb of care,
And he sate in mute agony still;
Till the night-stars shone through the cloudless air,
And the pale moon-beam slept on the hill.

VII.

Then he knelt in his cell:—
And the horrors of hell

Were delights to his agoniz'd pain.
And he pray'd to God to dissolve the spell,
Which else must for ever remain.

VIII.

And in fervent pray'r he knelt on the ground,
Till the abbey bell struck One:
His feverish blood ran chill at the sound:
A voice hollow and horrible murmur'd around,
"The term of thy penance is done!"

IX.

Grew dark the night;
The moon-beam bright
Wax'd faint on the mountain high;
And, from the black hill,
Went a voice cold and still,—
"Monk! thou art free to die."

X.

Then he rose on his feet,
And his heart loud did beat,
And his limbs they were palsied with dread;
Whilst the grave's clammy dew
O'er his pale forehead grew;
And he shudder'd to sleep with the dead.

XI.

And the wild midnight storm
Rav'd around his tall form,
As he sought the chapel's gloom:
And the sunk grass did sigh
To the wind, bleak and high,
As he search'd for the new-made tomb.

XII.

And forms, dark and high,
Seem'd around him to fly,
And mingle their yells with the blast:
And on the dark wall
Half-seen shadows did fall,
As enhorror'd he onward pass'd.

XIII.

And the storm-fiend's wild rave
O'er the new-made grave,
And dread shadows, linger around.
The Monk call'd on God his soul to save,
And, in horror, sank on the ground.

XIV.

Then despair nerv'd his arm
To dispel the charm,
And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder.
And the fierce storm did swell
More terrific and fell,
And louder peal'd the thunder.

XV.

And laugh'd, in joy, the fiendish throng,
Mix'd with ghosts of the mouldering dead:
And their grisly wings, as they floated along,
Whistled in murmurs dread.

XVI.

And her skeleton form the dead Nun rear'd,
Which dripp'd with the chill dew of hell.
In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale flames appear'd,
And triumphant their gleam on the dark Monk glar'd,
As he stood within the cell.

XVII.

And her lank hand lay on his shuddering brain;
But each power was nerv'd by fear.—
"I never, henceforth, may breathe again;
Death now ends mine anguish'd pain.—
The grave yawns,—we meet there."

XVIII.

And her skeleton lungs did utter the sound,
So deadly, so lone, and so fell,
That in long vibrations shudder'd the ground;
And as the stern notes floated around,
A deep groan was answer'd from hell.

As Steindolph concluded, an universal shout of applause echoed through the cavern. Every one had been so attentive to the recitation of the robber, that no opportunity of perpetrating his resolve had appeared to Wolfstein. Now all again was revelry and riot, and the wily designer eagerly watched for the instant when universal confusion might favour his attempt to drop, unobserved, the powder into the goblet of the chief. With a gaze of insidious and malignant revenge was the eye of Wolfstein fixed upon the chieftain's countenance. Cavigni perceived it not; for he was heated with wine, or the unusual expression of his associate's face must have awakened suspicion, or excited remark. Yet was Ginotti's gaze fixed upon Wolfstein, who, like a sanguinary and remorseless ruffian, sat expectantly waiting the instant of death. The goblet passed round:—at the moment when Wolfstein mingled the poison with Cavigni's wine, the eyes of Ginotti, which before had regarded him with the most dazzling scrutiny, were intentionally turned away: he then arose from the table, and, complaining of sudden indisposition, retired. Cavigni raised the goblet to his lips—

"Now, my brave fellows," he exclaimed, "the hour is late; but before we retire, I here drink success and health to every one of you."

Wolfstein involuntarily shuddered.—Cavigni quaffed the liquor to the dregs!—the cup fell from his trembling hand. The chill dew of death sat upon his forehead: in terrific convulsions he fell headlong; and, inarticulately uttering "I am poisoned," sank seemingly lifeless on the earth. Sixty robbers at once rushed forward to raise

him ; and, reclining in their arms, with an horrible and harrowing shriek, the spark of life fled from his body for ever. A robber, skilled in surgery, opened a vein ; but no blood followed the touch of the lancet.—Wolfstein advanced to the body, unappalled by the crime which he had committed, and tore aside the vest from its bosom : that bosom was discoloured by large spots of livid purple, which, by their premature appearance, declared the poison which had been used to destroy him, to be excessively powerful.

Every one regretted the death of the brave Cavigni ; every one was surprised at the mode of his death : and, by his abruptly quitting the apartment, the suspicion fell upon Ginotti, who was consequently sent for by Ardolph, a robber whom they had chosen chieftain, Wolfstein having declined the profferred distinction.

Ginotti arrived.—His stern countenance was changed not by the execrations showered on him by every one. He yet remained unmoved, and apparently careless what sentiments others might entertain of him : he deigned not even to deny the charge. This coolness seemed to have convinced every one, the new chief in particular, of his innocence.

" Let every one," said Ardolph, " be searched ; and if his pockets contain poison which could have effected this, let him die." This method was universally applauded. As soon as the acclamations were stilled, Wolfstein advanced forwards, and spoke thus :

" Any longer to conceal that it was I who perpetrated

the deed, were useless. Megalena's loveliness inflamed me:—I envied one who was about to possess it.—I have murdered him!"

Here he was interrupted by the shouts of the bandits; and he was about to be delivered to death, when Ginotti advanced. His superior and towering figure inspired awe even in the hearts of the bandits. They were silent.

"Suffer Wolfstein," he exclaimed, "to depart unhurt. *I* will answer for his never publishing our retreat: *I* will promise that never more shall you behold him."

Every one submitted to Ginotti: for who could resist the superior Ginotti? From the gaze of Ginotti Wolfstein's soul shrank, enhorrored, in confessed inferiority: he who had shrunk not at death, had shrunk not to avow himself guilty of murder, and had prepared to meet its reward, started from Ginotti's eye-beam as from the emanation of some superior and preter-human being.

"Quit the cavern!" said Ginotti.—"May I not remain here until the morrow?" inquired Wolfstein.—"If to-morrow's rising sun finds you in this cavern," returned Ginotti, "I must deliver you up to the vengeance of those whom you have injured."

Wolfstein retired to his solitary cell, to retrace, in his mind, the occurrences of this eventful night. What was he now?—an isolated wicked wanderer; not a being on earth whom he could call a friend, and carrying with him that never-dying tormentor—conscience. In half-waking dreams passed the night: the ghost of him whom

he had so inhumanly destroyed, seemed to cry for justice at the throne of God; bleeding, pale, and ghastly, it pressed on his agonized brain; and confused, inexplicable visions flitted in his imagination, until the freshness of the morning breeze warned him to depart. He collected together all those valuables which had fallen to his share as plunder, during his stay in the cavern: they amounted to a large sum. He rushed from the cavern; he hesitated,—he knew not whither to fly. He walked fast, and essayed, by exercise, to smother the feelings of his soul; but the attempt was fruitless. Not far had he proceeded, ere, stretched on the earth apparently lifeless, he beheld a female form. He advanced towards it—it was Megalena!

A tumult of exulting and inconceivable transport rushed through his veins as he beheld her—her for whom he had plunged into the abyss of crime. She slept, and, apparently overcome by the fatigues which she had sustained, her slumber was profound. Her head reclined upon the jutting root of a tree: the tint of health and loveliness sat upon her cheek.

When the fair Megalena awakened, and found herself in the arms of Wolfstein, she started; yet, turning her eyes, she beheld it was no enemy, and the expression of terror gave way to pleasure. In the general confusion had Megalena escaped from the abode of the bandits. The destinies of Wolfstein and Megalena were assimilated by similarity of situations; and, before they quitted the spot, so far had this reciprocal feeling prevailed, that they swore mutual affection. Megalena then related her escape from the cavern, and showed Wolfstein

jewels, to an immense amount, which she had secreted.

"At all events, then," said Wolfstein, "we may defy poverty; for I have about me jewels to the value of ten thousand zechins."

"We will go to Genoa," said Megalena. "We will, my fair one. There, entirely devoted to each other, we will defy the darts of misery."

Megalena returned no answer, save a look of else inexpressible love.

It was now the middle of the day; neither Wolfstein nor Megalena had tasted food since the preceding night; and faint, from fatigue, Megalena scarce could move onwards. "Courage, my love," said Wolfstein; "yet a little way, and we shall arrive at a cottage, a sort of inn, where we may wait until the morrow, and hire mules to carry us to Placenza, whence we can easily proceed to the goal of our destination."

Megalena collected her strength: in a short time they arrived at the cottage, and passed the remainder of the day in plans respecting the future. Wearied with unusual exertions, Megalena early retired to an inconvenient bed, which, however, was the best the cottage could afford; and Wolfstein, lying along the bench by the fireplace, resigned himself to meditation; for his mind was too much disturbed to let him sleep.

Although Wolfstein had every reason to rejoice at the

success which had crowned his schemes; although the very event had occurred which his soul had so much and so eagerly panted for; yet, even now, in possession of all he held valuable on earth, was he ill at ease. Remorse for his crimes, tortured him: yet, steeling his conscience, he essayed to smother the fire which burned within his bosom; to change the tenour of his thoughts—in vain! he could not. Restless passed the night, and the middle of the day beheld Wolfstein and Megalena far from the habitation of the bandits.

They intended, if possible, to reach Breno that night, and thence, on the following day, to journey towards Genoa. They had descended the southern acclivity of the Alps. It was now hastening towards spring, and the whole country began to gleam with the renewed loveliness of nature. Odoriferous orange-groves scented the air. Myrtles bloomed on the sides of the gentle eminences which they occasionally ascended. The face of nature was smiling and gay; so was Megalena's heart: with exulting and speechless transport it bounded within her bosom. She gazed on him who possessed her soul; although she felt no inclination in her bosom to retrace the events, by means of which an obscure bandit, undefinable to herself, had gained the eternal love of the former haughty Megalena di Metastasio.

They soon arrived at Breno. Wolfstein dismissed the muleteer, and conducted Megalena into the interior of the inn, ordering at the same time a supper. Again were repeated protestations of eternal affection, avowals of in-

dissoluble love; but it is sufficient to conceive what cannot be so well described.

It was near midnight; Wolfstein and Megalena sat at supper, and conversed with that unrestrainedness and gaiety which mutual confidence inspired, when the door was opened, and the innkeeper announced the arrival of a man who wished to speak with Wolfstein.

"Tell him," exclaimed Wolfstein, rather surprised, and wishing to guard against the possibility of danger, "that I will not see him."

The landlord left the room, and, in a short time, returned. A man accompanied him: he was of gigantic stature, and masked. "He would take no denial, Signor," said the landlord, in exculpation, as he left the room.

The stranger advanced to the table at which Wolfstein and Megalena sat: he threw aside his mask, and disclosed the features of—Ginotti! Wolfstein's frame became convulsed with involuntary horror: he started. Megalena was surprised.

Ginotti, at length, broke the terrible silence.

"Wolfstein," he said, "I saved you from, otherwise, inevitable death; by *my* means alone have you gained Megalena:—what do I then deserve in return?" Wolfstein looked on the countenance: it was stern and severe, yet divested of the terrible expression which had

before caused his frame to shudder with excess of alarm.

"My eternal gratitude," returned Wolfstein, hesitatingly.

"Will you promise, that when, destitute and a wanderer, I demand your protection, when I beseech you to listen to the tale which I shall relate, you *will* listen to me; that, when I am dead, you will bury me, and suffer my soul to rest in the endless slumber of annihilation? Then will you repay me for the benefits which I have conferred upon you."

"I will," replied Wolfstein, "I will perform all that you require."

"Swear it!" exclaimed Ginotti.

"I swear."

Ginotti then abruptly quitted the apartment; the sound of his footsteps was heard descending the stairs; and, when they were no longer audible, a weight seemed to have been taken from the breast of Wolfstein.

"How did that man save your life?" inquired Megalena.

"He was one of our band," replied Wolfstein, evasively, "and, on a plundering excursion, his pistol-ball entered the heart of the man, whose sabre, lifted

aloft, would else have severed my head from my body."

"Dear Wolfstein, who are you?—whence came you?—for you were not always an Alpine bandit?"

"That is true, my adored one; but fate presents an insuperable barrier to my ever relating the events which occurred previously to my connexion with the banditti. Dearest Megalena, if you love me, never question me concerning my *past* life, but rest satisfied with the conviction, that my future existence shall be devoted to you, and to you alone." Megalena felt surprise; but although eagerly desiring to unravel the mystery in which Wolfstein shrouded himself, desisted from inquiry.

Ginotti's mysterious visit had made too serious an impression on the mind of Wolfstein to be lightly erased. In vain he essayed to appear easy and unembarrassed while he conversed with Megalena. He attempted to drown thought in wine—but in vain:—Ginotti's strange injunction pressed, like a load of ice, upon his breast. At last, the hour being late, they both retired to their respective rooms.

Early on the following morning, Wolfstein arose, to arrange the necessary preparations for their journey to Genoa; whither he had sent a servant whom he hired at Breno, to prepare accommodations for their arrival.—Needless were it minutely to describe each trivial event which occurred during their journey to Genoa.

On the morning of the fourth day, they found themselves within a short distance of the city. They determined on the plan they should adopt, and, in a short space of time, arriving at Genoa, took up their residence in a mansion on the outermost extremity of the city.

CHAP. III.

> Whence, and what art thou, execrable shape,
> That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
> Thy miscreated front athwart my way?
>
> PARADISE LOST.

TIME passed; and, settled in their new habitation, Megalena and Wolfstein appeared to defy the arrows of vengeful destiny.

Wolfstein resolved to allow some time to elapse before he spoke of the subject nearest to his heart, of herself, to Megalena. One evening, however, overcome by the passion which, by mutual indulgence, had become resistless, he cast himself at her feet, and, avowing most unbounded love, demanded the promised return. A slight spark of virtue yet burned in the bosom of the wretched girl; she essayed to fly from temptation; but Wolfstein, seizing her hand, said, "And is my adored Megalena a victim then to prejudice? Does she believe, that the Being who created us gave us passions which never were to be satiated? Does she suppose that Nature created us to become the tormentors of each other?"

"Ah! Wolfstein," Megalena said tenderly, "rise!—

You know too well the chain which unites me to you is indissoluble; you know that I must be thine; where, therefore, is there an appeal?"

"To thine own heart, Megalena; for, if my image implanted there is not sufficiently eloquent to confirm your hesitating soul, I would wish not for a casket that contains a jewel unworthy of my possession."

Megalena involuntarily started at the strength of his expression; she felt how completely she was his, and turned her eyes upon his countenance, to read in it the meaning of his words.—His eyes gleamed with excessive and confiding love.

"Yes," exclaimed Megalena, "yes, prejudice avaunt! once more reason takes her seat, and convinces me, that to be Wolfstein's is not criminal. O Wolfstein! if for a moment Megalena has yielded to the imbecility of nature, believe that she yet knows how to recover herself, to reappear in her proper character. Ere I knew you, a void in my heart, and a tasteless carelessness of those objects which now interest me, confessed your unseen empire; my heart longed for something which now it has attained. I scruple not, Wolfstein, to aver that it is you:—Be mine, then, and let our affection end not but with our existence!"

"Never, never shall it end!" enthusiastically exclaimed Wolfstein. "Never!—What can break the bond joined by congeniality of sentiment, cemented by an union of soul which must endure till the intellectual particles which compose it become annihilated? Oh!

never shall it end; for when, convulsed by nature's latest ruin, sinks the fabric of this perishable globe; when the earth is dissolved away, and the face of heaven is rolled from before our eyes like a scroll; then will we seek each other, and, in eternal, indivisible, although immaterial union, shall we exist to all eternity."

Yet the love, with which Wolfstein regarded Megalena, notwithstanding the strength of his expressions, though fervent and excessive, at first, was not of that nature which was likely to remain throughout existence; it was like the blaze of the meteor at midnight, which glares amid the darkness for awhile, and then expires; yet did he love her now; at least if heated admiration of her person and accomplishments, independently of mind, be love.

* * * * * * * * * *

Blessed in mutual affection, if so it may be called, the time passed swift to Wolfstein and Megalena. No incident worthy of narration occurred to disturb the uninterrupted tenour of their existence. Tired, at last, even with delight, which had become monotonous from long continuance, they began to frequent the public places. It was one evening, nearly a month subsequent to their first residence at Genoa, that they went to a party at the Duca di Thice. It was there that he beheld the gaze of one of the crowd fixed upon him. Indefinable to himself were the emotions which shook him; in vain he turned to every part of the saloon to avoid the scrutiny of the stranger's gaze; he was not able to give formation,

in his own mind, to the ideas which struck him; they were acknowledged, however, in his heart, by sensations awful, and not to be described. He knew that he had before seen the features of the stranger; but he had forgotten Ginotti; for it was Ginotti—from whose scrutinizing glance, Wolfstein turned appalled;—it was Ginotti, of whose strangely and fearfully gleaming eyeball Wolfstein endeavoured to evade the fascination in vain. His eyes, resistlessly attracted to the sphere of chill horror that played around Ginotti's glance, in vain were fixed on vacuity; in vain attempted to notice other objects. Complaining to Megalena of sudden and violent indisposition, Wolfstein with her retired, and they quickly reached the steps of their mansion. Arrived there, Megalena tenderly inquired the cause of Wolfstein's illness, but his vague answers, and unconnected exclamations, soon led her to suppose it was not corporeal. She entreated him to acquaint her with the reason of his indisposition; Wolfstein, however, wishing to conceal from Megalena the true cause of his emotions, evasively told her that he had felt excessively faint from the heat of the assembly; she well knew, by his manner, that he had not told her truth, but affected to be satisfied, resolving, at some future period, to develope the mystery with which he evidently was environed. Retired to rest, Wolfstein's mind, torn by contending paroxysms of passion, admitted not of sleep; he ruminated on the mysterious reappearance of Ginotti; and the more he reflected, the more did the result of his reflections lead him astray. The strange gaze of Ginotti, and the consciousness that he was completely in the power of so indefinable a being; the consciousness that, wheresoever he might go, Ginotti would still follow him, pressed upon

Wolfstein's heart. Ignorant of what connexion they could have with this mysterious observer of his actions, his crimes recurred in hideous and disgustful array to the bewildered mind of Wolfstein; he reflected, that, although now exulting in youthful health and vigour, the time would come, the dreadful day of retribution, when endless damnation would yawn beneath his feet, and he would shrink from eternal punishment before the tribunal of that God whom he had insulted. To evade death, unconscious why, became an idea on which he dwelt with earnestness; he thought on it for a time, and being mournfully convinced of its impossibility, strove to change the tenour of his reflections.

While these thoughts dwelt in his mind, sleep crept imperceptibly over his senses; yet, in his visions, was Ginotti present. He dreamed that he stood on the brink of a frightful precipice, at whose base, with deafening and terrific roar, the waves of the ocean dashed; that, above his head, the blue glare of the lightning dispelled the obscurity of midnight, and the loud crashing of the thunder was rolled frantically from rock to rock; that, along the cliff on which he stood, a figure, more frightful than the imagination of man is capable of portraying, advanced towards him, and was about to precipitate him headlong from the summit of the rock whereon he stood, when Ginotti advanced, and rescued him from the grasp of the monster; that no sooner had he done this, than the figure dashed Ginotti from the precipice—his last groans were borne on the blast which swept the bosom of the ocean. Confused visions then obliterated the impressions of the former, and he rose in the morning restless and unrefreshed.

A weight which his utmost efforts could not remove, pressed upon the bosom of Wolfstein; his mind, superior and towering as it was, found all its energies inefficient to conquer it. As a last resource, therefore, this wretched victim of vice and folly sought the gaming-table; a scene which alone could raise the spirits of one who required something important, even in his pastimes, to interest him. He staked large sums; and, although he concealed his haunts from Megalena, she soon discovered them. For a time, fortune smiled; till one evening he entered his mansion, desperate from ill luck, and, accusing his own hapless destiny, could no longer conceal the truth from Megalena. She reproved him mildly, and her tenderness had such an effect on Wolfstein that he burst into tears, and promised her that never again would he yield to the vicious influence of folly.

The rapid days rolled on, and each one brought the conviction to Wolfstein more strongly, that Megalena was not the celestial model of perfection which his warm imagination had portrayed; he began to find in her, not the exhaustless mine of interesting converse which he had once supposed. Possession, which, when unassisted by real, intellectual love, clogs man, increases the ardent, uncontrollable passions of woman even to madness. Megalena yet adored Wolfstein with most fervent love:—although yet greatly attached to Megalena, although he would have been uneasy were she another's, Wolfstein no longer regarded her with that idolatrous affection which had filled his bosom towards her. Feelings of this nature, naturally drove Wolfstein occasionally from home to seek for employment—and what employment, save gaming, could Genoa afford to Wolfstein?—In what other occu-

pation was it possible that he could engage? It was done: he broke his promise to Megalena, and became even a more devoted votary to gambling than before.

How powerful are the attractions of delusive vice! Wolfstein soon staked large sums—larger even than ever. With what anxiety did he watch the dice!—How were his eyeballs strained with mingled anticipation of wealth and poverty! Now fortune smiled; yet he concealed even his good luck from Megalena. At length the tide changed again: he lost immense sums; and, desperate from a series of ill success, cursed his hapless destiny, and with wildest emotions rushed into the street. Again he solemnly swore to Megalena, that never more would he risk their mutual happiness by his folly.

Still, hurried away by the impulse of a burning desire of interesting his deadened feelings, did Wolfstein, false to his promise, seek the gaming-table; he had staked an enormous amount, and the fatal throw was at this instant about to decide the fate of the unhappy Wolfstein.

A pause, as if some dreadful event were about to occur, ensued; each gazed upon the countenance of Wolfstein, which, desperate from danger, retained, however, an expressive firmness.

A stranger stood before Wolfstein on the opposite side of the table. He appeared to have no interest in what was going forward, but, with unmoved gaze, fixed his eyes upon his countenance.

Wolfstein felt an instinctive shuddering thrill through

his frame, when, oh horrible confirmation of his wildest apprehensions! it was—Ginotti!—the terrible, the mysterious Ginotti, whose dire scrutiny, resting upon Wolfstein, chilled his soul with excessive affright.

A sensation of extreme and conflicting emotions shook the inmost recesses of Wolfstein's heart; for an instant his brain swam around in wildest commotion, yet he steeled his resolution, even to the horrors of hell and destruction; he gazed on the mysterious scrutineer who stood before him, and, regardless of the sum he had staked, and which before had engaged his whole attention, and excited his liveliest interest, dashed the box convulsively upon the table, and followed Ginotti, who was about to quit the apartment, resolving to clear up a fatality which hung around him, and appeared to blast his prospects; for of the misfortunes which had succeeded his association with the bandits, he had not the slightest doubt, in his own mind, that Ginotti was the cause.

With reflections a scene of the wildest anarchy, Wolfstein resolved to unravel the mystery in which he saw Ginotti was shrouded; and resolved, therefore, to devote that night towards finding out his abode. With feelings such as these, he rushed into the street, and followed the gigantic form of Ginotti, who stalked onwards majestically, as if conscious of safety, and wholly ignorant of the eager scrutiny with which Wolfstein watched his every movement.

It was midnight—yet they continued to advance; a feeling of desperation urged Wolfstein onwards; he

resolved to follow Ginotti, even to the extremity of the universe. They passed through many bye and narrow streets; the darkness was complete; but the rays of the lamps, as they fell upon the lofty form of Ginotti, guided the footsteps of Wolfstein.

They had reached the end of the Strada Nuova; the lengthened sound of Ginotti's footsteps was all that struck upon Wolfstein's ear. On a sudden, Ginotti's figure disappeared from Wolfstein's gaze; in vain he looked around him, in vain he searched every recess, wherein he might have secreted himself—Ginotti was gone!

To describe the surprise mingled with awe, which possessed Wolfstein's bosom, is impossible. In vain he searched every part. He proceeded to the bridge; a party of fishermen were waiting there; he inquired of them, had they seen a man of superior stature pass? they appeared surprised at his question, and unanimously answered in the negative. While varying emotions tumultuously contended within his bosom, Wolfstein, ever the victim of extraordinary events, paused awhile, revolving the mystery both of Ginotti's appearance and disappearance. That business of an important nature led him to Genoa, he doubted not; his indifference at the gaming-table, his particular regard of Wolfstein, left, in the mind of the latter, no doubt, but that he took a terrible and mysterious interest in whatever related to him.

All now was silent. The inhabitants of Genoa lay

wrapped in sleep, and, save the occasional conversation of the fishermen who had just returned, no sound broke on the uninterrupted stillness, and thick clouds obscured the star-beams of heaven.

Again Wolfstein searched that part of the city which lay near Strada Nuova; but no one had seen Ginotti; although all wondered at the wild expressions and disordered mien of Wolfstein. The bell tolled the hour of three ere Wolfstein relinquished his pursuit; finding, however, further inquiry fruitless, he engaged a chair to take him to his habitation, where he doubted not that Megalena anxiously awaited his return.

Proceeding along the streets, the obscurity of the night was not so great but that he observed the figure of one of the chairmen to be above that of common men, and that he had drawn his hat forwards to conceal his countenance. His appearance, however, excited no remark; for Wolfstein was too much absorbed in the idea which related individually to himself, to notice what, perhaps, at another time, might have excited wonder. The wind sighed moaningly along the stilly colonnades, and the grey light of morning began to appear above the eastern eminences.

They entered the street which soon led to the abode of Wolfstein, who fixed his eyes upon the chairman. His gigantic proportions struck him with involuntary awe: such is the unaccountable connexion of idea in the mind of man. He shuddered. Such a man, thought he, is Ginotti: such a man is he who watches my every action, whose power I feel within myself is resistless, and not to

be evaded. He sighed deeply when he reflected on the terrible connexion, dreadful although mysterious, which subsisted between himself and Ginotti. His soul sank within him at the idea of his own littleness, when a fellow-mortal might be able to gain so strong, though sightless, an empire over him. He felt that he was no longer independent. Whilst these thoughts agitated his mind, the chair had stopped at his habitation. He turned round to discharge the chairman's fare, when, casting his eyes on his countenance, which hitherto had remained concealed, oh horrible and chilling conviction! he recognised in his dark features those of the terrific Ginotti. As if hell had yawned at the feet of the hapless Wolfstein, as if some spectre of the night had blasted his straining eyeball, so did he stand transfixed. His soul shrank with mingled awe and abhorrence from a being who, even to himself, was confessedly superior to the proud and haughty Wolfstein. Ere well he could calm his faculties, agitated by so unexpected an interview, Ginotti said,

"Wolfstein! long have I known you; long have I marked you as the only man who now exists, worthy, and appreciating the value of what I have in store for you. Inscrutable are my intentions; seek not, therefore, to develope them: time will do it in a far more complete manner. You shall not now know the motive for my, to you, unaccountable actions: strive not, therefore, to unravel them. You may frequently see me: never attempt to speak or follow; for, if you do——" Here the eyes of Ginotti flashed with coruscations of inexpressible fire, and his every feature became animated by the tortures which he was about to describe; but he suddenly checked himself, and only added, "Attend to these my directions,

but try, if possible, to forget me. I am not what I seem. The time may come, *will* most probably arrive, when I shall appear in my real character to you. You, Wolfstein, have I singled out from the whole world to make the depositary——" He ceased, and abruptly quitted the spot.

CHAP. IV.

——Nature shrinks back,
Enhorror'd from the lurid gaze of vengeance,
E'en in the deepest caverns, and the voice
Of all her 'works lies hush'd. OLYMPIA.

ON Wolfstein's return to his habitation, he found Megalena in anxious expectation of his arrival. She feared that some misfortune had befallen him. Wolfstein related to her the events of the preceding night; they appeared to her mysterious and inexplicable; nor could she offer any consolation to the wretched Wolfstein.

The occurrences of the preceding evening left a load upon his breast, which all the gaieties of Genoa were insufficient to dispel: eagerly he longed for the visit of Ginotti. Slow dragged the hours: each day did he expect it, and each succeeding day brought but disappointment to his expectations.

Megalena too, the beautiful, the adored Megalena, was no longer what formerly she was, the innocent girl hanging on his support, and depending wholly upon him for defence and protection; no longer, with mild and love-

beaming eyes, she regarded the haughty Wolfstein as a superior being, whose look or slightest word was sufficient to decide her on any disputed point. No; dissipated pleasures had changed the former mild and innocent Megalena. Far, far different was she than when she threw herself into his arms on their escape from the cavern, and, with a blush, smiled upon the first declaration of Wolfstein's affection.

Now immersed in a succession of gay pleasures, Megalena was no longer the gentle interesting she, whose soul of sensibility would tremble if a worm beneath her feet expired; whose heart would sink within her at the tale of others' woe. She had become a fashionable belle, and forgot, in her new character, the fascinations of her old one. Still, however, was she ardently, solely, and resistlessly attached to Wolfstein: his image was implanted in her soul, never to be effaced by casualty, never erased by time. No coolness apparently took place between them; but, although unperceived and unacknowledged by each, an indifference evidently did exist between them. Among the various families whom their residence in Genoa had rendered familiar to Wolfstein and Megalena, none were more so than that of il Conte della Anzasca; it consisted of himself, la Contessa, and a daughter of exquisite loveliness, named Olympia.

This girl, mistress of every fascinating accomplishment, uniting in herself to great brilliancy and playfulness of wit, a person alluring beyond description, was in her eighteenth year. From habitual indulgence, her passions, naturally violent and excessive, had become irresistible; and when once she had fixed a determination in her

mind, that determination must either be effected, or she must cease to exist. Such, then, was the beautiful Olympia, and as such she conceived a violent and unconquerable passion for Wolfstein. His towering and majestic form, his expressive and regular features, beaming with somewhat of softness; yet pregnant with a look as if woe had beat to the earth a mind whose native and unconfined energies aspired to heaven—all, all told her, that, without him, she must either cease to be, or drag on a life of endless and irremediable woe. Nourished by restless imagination, her passion soon attained a most unbridled height: instead of conquering a feeling which honour, generosity, virtue, all forbade ever to be gratified, she gloried within herself at having found one on whom she might with justice fix her burning attachment; for although the object of them had never before been present to her mind, the desires for that object, although unseen, had taken root long, long ago. A false system of education, and a wrong expansion of ideas, as they became formed, had been put in practice with respect to her youthful mind; and indulgence strengthened the passions which it behoved restraint to keep within proper bounds, and which might have unfolded themselves as coadjutors of virtue, and not as promoters of vicious and illicit love. Fiercer, nevertheless, in proportion as greater obstacles appeared in the prosecution of her resolve, flamed the passion of the devoted Olympia. Her brain was whirled round in the fiercest convulsions of expectant happiness; the anticipation of gratified voluptuousness swelled her bosom even to bursting, yet did she rein-in the boiling emotions of her soul, and resolved to be sufficiently cool, more certainly to accomplish her purpose.

It was one night when Wolfstein's mansion was the scene of gaiety, that this idea first suggested itself to the mind of Olympia, and unfolded itself to her, as it really was love for Wolfstein. In vain the suggestions of generosity, the voice of conscience, which told her how doubly wicked would be the attempt of alienating from her the lover of her friend Megalena, in audible, though noiseless, accents spoke; in vain the native modesty of her sex represented in its real and hideous colours what she was about to do: still Olympia was resolved.

That night, in the solitude of her own chamber, in the palazzo of her father, she retraced in her mind the various events which had led to her present uncontrollable passion, which had employed her whole thoughts, and rendered her, as it were, dead to every other outward existence. The wild transports of maddening desire raved terrific within her breast: she endeavoured to smother the ideas which presented themselves; but the more she strove to erase them from her mind, the more vividly were they represented in her heated and enthusiastic imagination. "And will he not return my love?" she exclaimed: "will he not?—ah! a bravo's dagger shall pierce his heart, and thus will I reward him for his contempt of Olympia della Anzasca. But no! it is impossible. I will cast myself at his feet; I will avow to him the passion which consumes me,—will swear to be ever, ever his! Can he then cast me from him? Can he despise a woman whose only fault is love, nay idolatry, adoration for him?"

She paused.—The tumultuous passions of her soul were now too fierce for utterance—too fierce for conceal-

ment or restraint. The hour was late; the moon poured its mildly-lustrous beams upon the lengthened colonnades of Genoa, when Olympia, overcome by emotions such as these, quitted her father's palazzo, and hastened, with rapid and unequal footsteps, towards the mansion of Wolfstein. The streets were by no means crowded; but those who yet lingered in them gazed with slight surprise on the figure of Olympia, which, light and symmetrical as a celestial sylphid, passed swiftly onwards.

She soon arrived at the habitation of Wolfstein, and sent the domestic to announce that one wished to speak with him, whose business was pressing and secret. She was conducted into an apartment, and there awaited the arrival of Wolfstein. A confused expression of awe played upon his features as he entered; but it suddenly gave place to that of surprise. He started upon perceiving Olympia, and said,

"To what, Lady Olympia, do I owe the unforeseen pleasure of your visit? What so mysterious business have you with me?" continued he playfully. "But come, we had just sat down to supper; Megalena is within."—"Oh! if you wish to see me expire in horrible torments at your feet, inhuman Wolfstein, call for Megalena! and then will your purpose be accomplished."—"Dearest Lady Olympia, compose yourself, I beseech you," said Wolfstein: "what, what agitates you?"—"Oh! pardon, pardon me," she exclaimed, with maniac wildness: "pardon a wretched female who knows not what she does! Oh! resistlessly am I impelled to this avowal; resistlessly am I impelled to declare to you, that I love you! adore you to distraction!

"—Will you return my affection? But, ah! I rave! Megalena, the beloved Megalena, claims you as her own; and the wretched Olympia must moan the blighted prospects which were about to open fair before her eyes."

"For Heaven's sake, dear lady, compose yourself; recollect who you are; recollect the loftiness of birth and loveliness of form which are so eminently yours. This, this is far beneath Olympia."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, frantically casting herself at his feet, and bursting into a passion of tears, "what are birth, fame, fortune, and all the advantages which are casually given to me! I swear to thee, Wolfstein, that I would sacrifice not only these, but even all my hopes of future salvation, even the forgiveness of my Creator, were it required from me. O Wolfstein, kind, pitying Wolfstein, look down with an eye of indulgence on a female whose only crime is resistless, unquenchable adoration of you."

She panted for breath, her pulses beat with violence, her eyes swam, and, overcome by the conflicting passions of her soul, the frame of Olympia fell, sickening with faintness, on the ground. Wolfstein raised her, and tenderly essayed to recall the senses of the hapless girl. Recovering, and perceiving her situation, Olympia started, seemingly horrified, from the arms of Wolfstein. The energies of her high mind instantly resumed their functions, and she exclaimed, "Then, base and ungrateful Wolfstein, you refuse to unite your fate with mine? My love is ardent and excessive, but the revenge which may follow the despiser of it is far more impetuous; reflect well then ere you drive Olympia della Anzasca to

despair."—"No reflection, in the present instance, is needed, Lady," replied Wolfstein, coolly, yet determinedly. "What man of honour needs a moment's rumination to discover what nature has so inerasibly implanted in his bosom—the sense of right and wrong? I am connected with a female whom I love, who confides in me; in what manner should I merit her confidence, if I join myself to another? Nor can the loveliness, the exquisite, the unequalled loveliness of the beautiful Olympia della Anzasca compensate me for breaking an oath sworn to another."

He paused.—Olympia spake not, but appeared to be awaiting the dreadful fiat of her destiny.

"Olympia," Wolfstein continued, "pardon me! Were I not irrevocably Megalena's, I must be thine: I esteem you, I admire you, but my love is another's."

The passion which before had choked Olympia's utterance, appeared to give way to the impetuousness of her emotions.

"Then," she said, as a solemnity of despair toned her voice to firmness, "then you are irrevocably another's?"

"I am compelled to be explicit; I am compelled to say, I am another's for ever!" fervently returned Wolfstein.

Again fainting from the excess of painful feeling which vibrated through her frame, Olympia fell at Wolfstein's

feet! again he raised her, and, in anxious solicitude, watched her varying countenance. At the critical instant when Olympia had just recovered from the faintness which had oppressed her, the door burst open, and disclosed to the view of the passion-grieving Olympia, the detested form of Megalena. A silence, resembling that when a solemn pause in the midnight-tempest announces that the elements only hesitate to collect more terrific force for the ensuing explosion, took place, while Megalena surveyed Olympia and Wolfstein. Still she spoke not; yet the silence, even more terrible than the commotion which followed, continued to prevail. Olympia dashed by Megalena, and faintly articulating "Vengeance!" rushed into the street, and bent her rapid flight to the Palazzo di Anzasca.

"Wolfstein," said Megalena, her voice quivering with excessive emotion, "Wolfstein, how have I deserved this? How have I deserved a dereliction so barbarous and so unprovoked? But no!" she added in a firmer tone; "no! I will leave you! I will show that I can bear the tortures of disappointed love, better than you can evade the scrutiny of one who did adore thee."

In vain Wolfstein put in practice every soothing art to tranquillize the agitation of Megalena. Her frame trembled with violent shuddering; yet her soul, as it were, superior to the form which enshrined it, loftily towered, and retained its firmness amidst the frightful chaos which battled within.

"Now," said she to Wolfstein, "I will leave you!"

"O God! Megalena, dearest, adored Megalena!" exclaimed Wolfstein, passionately, "stop—I love you, must ever love you: deign, at least, to hear me."—"What good would accrue from that?" gloomily inquired Megalena.

Wolfstein rushed towards her; he threw himself at her feet, and exclaimed, "If ever, for one instant, my soul was alienated from thee—if ever it swerved from the affection which I have sworn to thee—may the red right hand of God instantaneously dash me beneath the lowest abyss of hell! O Megalena! is it as a victim of groundless jealousy that I have immolated myself at the altar of thy perfections? Have I only raised myself to this summit of happiness to feel more deeply the fall of which thou art the cause! O Megalena! if yet one spark of thy former love lingers in thy breast, oh! believe one who swears that he must be thine even till the particles which compose the soul devoted to thee, become annihilated."—He paused.

Megalena heard his wildly enthusiastic expressions in sullen silence. She looked upon him with a stern and severe gaze:—he yet lay at her feet, and, hiding his face upon the earth, groaned deeply. "What proof," exclaimed Megalena, impatiently, "what proof will Wolfstein, the deceiver, bring to satisfy me that his love is still mine?"

"Seek for proof in my heart," returned Wolfstein; "that heart which yet is bleeding from the thorns which thou, cruel girl, hast implanted in it: seek it in my every action, and then will the convinced Megalena

know that Wolfstein is hers irrevocably—body and soul, for ever!"

"Yet, I believe thee not!" said Megalena; "for the haughty Olympia della Anzasca would scarcely recline in the arms of a man who was not entirely devoted to her."

Yet were the charms of Megalena unfaded; yet their empire over Wolfstein excessive and complete.

"Still I believe thee not," continued she, as a smile of expectant malice sat upon her cheek. "I require some proof which will assuredly convince me, that I am yet beloved: give me proof, and Megalena will again be Wolfstein's."—"Oh!" said Wolfstein, mournfully, "what farther proof can I give, but my oath, that never in soul or body have I broken the allegiance that I formerly swore to thee?"

"The death of Olympia!" gloomily returned Megalena.

"What mean you?" said Wolfstein, starting.

"I mean," continued Megalena, collectedly, as if what she was about to utter had been the result of serious cogitation; "I mean that, if ever you wish again to possess my affections, ere to-morrow morning, Olympia must expire!"

"Murder the innocent Olympia?"

"Yes!"

A pause ensued; during which the mind of Wolfstein, torn by ten thousand warring emotions, knew not on what to resolve. He gazed upon Megalena; her symmetrical form shone with tenfold loveliness to his enraptured imagination: again he resolved to behold those eyes beam with affection for him, which were now gloomily fixed upon the ground. "Will nothing else convince Megalena that Wolfstein is eternally hers?"

"Nothing."

"'Tis done then," exclaimed Wolfstein, "'tis done. Yet," he muttered, "I may suffer for this premeditated act tortures now inconceivable; I may writhe, convulsed, in immaterial agony for ever and for ever—ah! I cannot. No!" he continued; "Megalena, I am again yours; I will immolate the victim which thou requirest as a sacrifice to our love. Give me a dagger, which may sweep off from the face of the earth, one who is hateful to thee! Adored creature, give me the dagger, and I will restore it to thee dripping with Olympia's hated blood; it shall have first been buried in her heart."

"Then, then again art thou mine own! again art thou the idolized Wolfstein, whom I was wont to love!" said Megalena, enfolding him in her embrace. Perceiving her returning softness, Wolfstein essayed to induce her to spare him the frightful proof of the ardour of his attachment; but she started from his arms as he spoke, and exclaimed,

"Ah! base deceiver, do you hesitate?"

"Oh, no! I do not hesitate, dearest Megalena;—give me a dagger, and I go."

"Here, follow me, then," returned Megalena. He followed her to the supper-room.

"It is useless to go yet, it has but yet struck one; the inhabitants of il Palazzo della Anzasca will, about two, be nearly all retired to rest; till then, let us converse on what we were about to do." So far did Megalena's seductive blandishment, her artful selection of converse, win upon Wolfstein, that, when the destined hour approached, his sanguinary soul thirsted for the blood of the comparatively innocent Olympia.

"Well!" he cried, swallowing down an overflowing goblet of wine, "now the time is come; now suffer me to go, and tear the soul of Olympia from her hated body." His fury amounted almost to delirium, as, masked, and having a dagger, which Megalena had given him, concealed beneath his garments, he proceeded rapidly along the streets towards the Palazzo della Anzasca. So eager was he to shed the life-blood of Olympia, that he flew, rather than ran, along the silent streets of Genoa. The colonnades of the lofty Palazzo della Anzasca resounded to his rapid footsteps; he stopped at its lofty portal:—it was open; unperceived he entered, and, hiding himself behind a column, according to the directions of Megalena, waited there. Soon advancing through the hall, he saw the sylph-like figure of the lovely Olympia; with silent tread he followed it, experiencing not the slightest sentiment of remorse within his bosom for the deed which he was

about to perpetrate. He followed her to her apartment, and secreting himself until Olympia might have sunk into sleep, with sanguinary and remorseless patience, when her loud breathing convinced him that her slumber was profound, he arose from his place of concealment, and advanced to the bed, wherein Olympia lay. Her light tresses, disengaged from the band which had confined them, floated around a countenance, superhumanly beautiful, and whose expression, even in slumber, appeared to be tinted by Wolfstein's refusal; convulsive sighs heaved her fair bosom, and tears, starting from under her eyelids, fell profusely down her damask cheek. Wolfstein gazed upon her in silence. "Cruel, inhuman Megalena!" he mentally soliloquized; "could nothing but immolation of this innocence appease thee?" Again he stifled the stings of rebelling conscience; again the unquenchable and resistless ardour of his love for Megalena stimulated him to the wildest pitch of fury: he raised high the dagger, and, drawing aside the covering which veiled her alabaster bosom, paused an instant, to decide in which place it were most instantaneously destructive to strike. Again a mournful smile irradiated her lovely features; it played with a sweet softness on her countenance: it seemed as though she smiled in defiance of the arrows of destiny, but that her soul, nevertheless, lingered with the wretch who sought her life. Maddened by the sight of so much beauteous innocence, even the desperate Wolfstein, forgetful of the danger which he must thereby incur, hurled the dagger from him. The sound awakened Olympia: she started up in surprise; but her alarm was changed into ecstacy when she beheld the idolized possessor of her soul standing before her.

"I was dreaming of you," said Olympia, scarcely knowing whether this were not a dream; but, impulsively following the first emotions of her soul, "I dreamed that you were about to murder me. It is not so, Wolfstein, no! you would not murder one who adores you?"

"Murder Olympia! O God! no!—I take Heaven to witness, that I never *now* could do it!"

"Nor could you ever, I hope, dear Wolfstein; but drive away thoughts like these, and remember that Olympia lives but for thee; and the moment which takes from her your affections, seals the death-like fiat of her destiny." These asseverations, strengthened by the most solemn and deadly vows that he would return to Megalena the destroyer of Olympia, flashed across Wolfstein's mind. Perpetrate the deed, now, he could not; his soul became a scene of most terrific agony. "Wilt thou be mine?" exclaimed the enraptured Olympia, as a ray of hope arose in her mind. "Never! never can I," groaned the agitated Wolfstein; "I am irrevocably, indissolubly another's." Maddened by this death-blow to all expectations of happiness, which the deluded Olympia had so fondly anticipated, she leaped wildly from the bed. A light and flowing night-dress alone veiled her form: her alabaster bosom was shaded by the light ringlets of her hair which rested unconfined upon it. She threw herself at the feet of Wolfstein. On a sudden, as if struck by some thought, she started convulsively from the earth: for an instant she paused.

The rays of a lamp, which stood in a recess of the

apartment, fell full upon the dagger of Wolfstein. Eagerly Olympia sprung towards it; and, ere Wolfstein was aware of her dreadful intent, plunged it into her bosom. Weltering in purple gore she fell: no groan, no sigh escaped her lips. A smile, which the pangs of dissolution could not dispel, played on her convulsed countenance; it irradiated her features with celestially awful, although terrific expression. "Ineffectually have I endeavoured to conquer the ardent feelings of my soul; now I overcome them," were her last words. She uttered them in a tone of firmness, and, falling back, expired in torments, which her fine, her expressive features declared that she gloried in.

All was silent in the chamber of death: the stillness was frightful. The agonies which Wolfstein endured were past description: for a time he neither moved nor spoke. The pale glare of the lamp fell upon the features of Olympia, from which the tinge of life had fled for ever. Suddenly, and in despite of himself, were the affections of Wolfstein turned from Megalena: he could not but now regard her as a fiend, who had been the cause of Olympia's destruction; who had urged him to a deed from which his nature now shrunk as from annihilation. A wild paroxysm of awful alarm seized upon him: he knelt by the side of Olympia's corpse; he kissed it, bathed it with his tears, and imprecated a thousand curses on himself. Her features, although convulsed by the agonies of violent dissolution, retained an unchanging image of loveliness, which never might fade away. Her beautiful bosom, in which her hand yet held the fatal dagger, was discoloured with blood, and those affection-beaming orbs were now closed in the never-ending

slumber of the grave. Unable longer to endure a sight of so much horror, Wolfstein started up, and, forgetful of every thing save the frightful deed which he had witnessed, rushed from the Palazzo della Anzasca, and mechanically retraced his way towards his own habitation.

Not once that night had Megalena closed her eyes. Her infuriate passions had wound her soul up to a deadly calmness of expectation. She had not, during the whole of the night, retired to rest, but sat, with sanguinary patience, cursing the lagging hours that they passed so slowly, and waiting to hear tidings of death. Morning had begun to streak the eastern sky with gray, when Wolfstein hurried into the supper-room, where Megalena still sat, wildly exclaiming "The deed is done!" Megalena entreated him to be calm, and, more collectedly, to communicate the events which had occurred during the night.

"In the first place," he said in an accent of feigned horror, "the officers of justice are alarmed!"

Deadly affright chilled the soul of Megalena: she turned pale, and, gasping for breath, inquired eagerly respecting the success of his attempt.

"O God!" exclaimed Wolfstein, "that has succeeded but too well! the hapless Olympia welters in her life-blood!"

"Joy! joy!" frantically exclaimed Megalena, her eagerness for revenge overcoming, for the moment, every other feeling.

"But, Megalena," continued Wolfstein, "she fell not by my hand: no, she smiled on me in her sleep, and, when she awoke, finding me deaf to her solicitations, snatched my dagger, and buried it in her bosom."

"Did you *wish* to prevent the deed?" inquired Megalena.

"Oh! good God of Heaven! thou knowest my heart: I would sacrifice every remaining earthly good were Olympia again alive!"

Megalena spoke not, but a smile of exquisitely gratified malice illumined her features with terrific flame.

"We must instantly quit Genoa," said Wolfstein: "the name on the mask which I left in the Palazzo della Anzasca, will remove all doubt that I was the murderer of Olympia. Yet indeed I care not much for death; if you will it so, Megalena, we will even, as it is, remain in Genoa."

"Oh! no, no!" eagerly cried Megalena: "Wolfstein, I love you beyond expression, and Genoa is destruction; let us seek, therefore, some retired spot, where we may for a while at least secrete ourselves. But, Wolfstein, are you persuaded that I love you? need there more proof be required than that I wished the death of another for thee? it was on *that* account alone that I desired the destruction of Olympia, that thou mightest be more completely and irresistibly mine."

Wolfstein answered not: the feelings of his soul were

far different; the expression of his countenance plainly evinced them: and Megalena regretted that her effervescent passions should have led her to so rash an avowal of her contempt of virtue. They then separated to arrange their affairs, prior to their departure, which, on account of the pressing necessity of the case, must take place immediately. They took with them but two domestics, and, collecting all their stock of money, they were soon far from pursuit and Genoa.

CHAP. VII.[1]

Yes! 'tis the influence of that sightless fiend
Who guides my every footstep, that I feel:
An iron grasp arrests each fluttering sense,
And a fell voice howls in mine anguish'd ear,
"Wretch, thou may'st rest no more." OLYMPIA.

How sweet are the scenes endeared to us by ideas which we have cherished in the society of one we have loved! How melancholy to wander amongst them again after an absence, perhaps of years; years which have changed the tenour of our existence,—have changed even the friend, the dear friend, for whose sake alone the landscape lives in the memory, for whose sake tears flow at the[2] each varying feature of the scenery, which catches the eye of one who has never seen them since he saw them with the being who was dear to him!

Dark, autumnal, and gloomy was the hour; the winds whistled hollow, and over the expanse of heaven was spread an unvarying sombreness of vapour: nothing was heard save the melancholy shriekings of the night-bird, which, soaring on the evening blast, broke the stillness of

[1] There are no Chapters V. and VI.

[2] *Sic in orig.*

the scene, interrupting the meditations of frenzied enthusiasm; mingled with the sighing of the wind, which swept in languid and varying cadence amidst the leafless boughs.

Ah! of whom shall the poor outcast wanderer demand protection? Far, far has she wandered. The vice and unkindness of the world hath torn her tender heart. In whose bosom shall she repose the secret of her sufferings? Who will listen with pity to the narrative of her woe, and heal the wounds which the selfish unkindness of man hath made, and then sent her with them, unbound, on the wide and pitiless world? Lives there one whose confidence the sufferer might seek?

Cold and dreary was the night: November's blast had chilled the air. Is the blast so pitiless as ingratitude and selfishness? Ah, no! thought the wanderer; it is unkind indeed, but not *so* unkind as that.[1] Poor Eloise de St. Irvyne! many, many are in thy situation; but few have a heart so full of sensibility and excellence for the demoniac malice of man to deform, and then glut itself with hellish pleasure in the conviction of having ravaged the most lovely of the works of their Creator. She gazed upon the sky: the moon had just risen; its full orb was occasionally shaded by a passing cloud: it rose from behind the turrets of le Chateau de St. Irvyne. The poor girl raised her eyes towards it, streaming with tears: she

[1] The presence of this paraphrase of

> Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
> Thou art not so unkind
> As man's ingratitude,

may perhaps be taken as evidence that Shelley had been reading *As you Like it*, as well as *Hours of Idleness*.

scarce could recognise the once-loved building. She thanked God for permitting her again to behold it; and hastened on with steps tottering from fatigue, yet nerved with the sanguineness of anticipation.

Yes, St. Irvyne was the same as when she had left it five years ago. The same ivy mantled the western tower; the same jasmine which bloomed so luxuriantly when she left it, was still there, though leafless from the season. Thus was it with poor Eloise: she had left St. Irvyne, blooming, and caressed by every one; she returned to it pale, downcast, and friendless. The jasmine encircled the twisted pillars which supported the portal. Alas! whose assistance had prevented Eloise from sinking to the earth?—no one's. She knocked at the door—it was opened, and an instant's space beheld her in the arms of a beloved sister. Needless were it to describe the mutual pleasure, needless to describe the delight, of recognition; suffice it to say, that Eloise once more enjoyed the society of her dearest friend; and, in the happiness of her society, forgot the horrors which had preceded her return to St. Irvyne.

Now were it well for a while to leave Eloise at St. Irvyne, and retrace the events which, since five years, had so darkly tinged the fate of the unsuspecting female, who trusted to the promises of man. It was a beautiful morning in May, and the loveliness of the season had spread a deeper shade of gloom over the features of Eloise, for she knew that not long would her mother live. They journeyed on towards Geneva, whither the physicians had ordered Madame de St. Irvyne to repair, as the last resort of a hope that

she might, thereby, escape a rapid decline. On account of the illness of her mother, they proceeded slowly; and ere long they had entered the region of the Alps, the shades of evening, which rapidly began to increase, announced approaching night. They had expected, before this time, to have reached a town; but, either owing to a miscalculation of their route, or the remissness of the postillion, they had not yet done so. The majestic moon which hung above their heads, tinged with silver the fleecy clouds which skirted the far-seen horizon; and, borne on the soft wing of the evening zephyr, shadowy lines of vapour, at intervals, crossed her orbit; then vanishing into the dark blue expansiveness of ether, their fantastic forms, like the phantoms of midnight, became invisible. Now might we almost suppose, that the sightless spirits of the departed good, enthroned on the genial breeze of night, watched over those whom they had loved on earth, and poured into the bosom, to the dictates of which, in this world, they had listened with idolatrous attention, that tranquillity and confidence in the goodness of the Creator, which is necessary for us to experience ere we go to the next. Such tranquillity felt Madame de St. Irvyne: she tried to stifle the ideas which arose within her mind; but the more she strove to repress them, in the more vivid characters were they imprinted on the imagination.

Now had they gained the summit of the mountain, when, suddenly, a crash announced that the carriage had given way.

"What is to be done?" inquired Eloise. The

postillion appeared to take no notice of her question. "What is to be done?" again she inquired.

"Why, I scarcely know," answered the postillion; "but 'tis impossible to proceed."

"Is there no house nearer than——"

"Oh yes," replied he; "here is a house quite near, but a little out of the way; and, perhaps, Ma'am'selle will not——"

"Oh, lead on, lead on to it," quickly rejoined Eloise.

They followed the postillion, and soon arrived at the house. It was large and plain; and although there were lights in some of the windows, it bore an indefinable appearance of desolation.

In a large hall sat three or four men, whose marked countenances almost announced their profession to be bandits. *One* of superior and commanding figure whispering to the rest, and himself advancing with the utmost and most unexpected politeness, accosted the travellers. For the ideas with which the countenance of this man inspired Eloise she in vain endeavoured to account. It appeared to her that she had seen him before; that the deep tone of his voice was known to her; and that eye, scintillating with a coruscation of mingled sternness and surprise, found some counterpart in herself. Of gigantic stature, yet formed in the mould of exactest symmetry, was the

figure of the stranger who sate before Eloise. His countenance of excessive beauty even, but dark, emanated with an expression of superhuman loveliness; not that grace which may freely be admired, but acknowledged in the inmost soul by sensations mysterious, and before unexperienced. He tenderly inquired, whether the night air had injured the ladies, and pressed them to partake of a repast which the other three men had prepared; he appeared to unbend a severity, which evidently was habitual, and by extreme brilliancy and playfulness of wit, joined to talents for conversation, possessed by few, made Madame de St. Irvyne forget that she was dying; and her daughter, as in rapturous attention she listened to each accent of the stranger, remembered no more that she was about to lose her mother.

In the stranger's society, they almost forgot the lapse of time: a pause in the conversation at last occurred.

"Can Ma'am'selle sing?" inquired the stranger.

"I can," replied Eloise; "and with pleasure."

SONG.

How swiftly through heaven's wide expanse
Bright day's resplendent colours fade!
How sweetly does the moonbeam's glance
With silver tint St. Irvyne's glade!

No cloud along the spangled air,
Is borne upon the evening breeze;
How solemn is the scene! how fair
The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

Yon dark gray turret glimmers white,
  Upon it sits the mournful owl;
Along the stillness of the night,
  Her melancholy shriekings roll.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower,
  The silver moonbeam pours her ray;
It gleams upon the ivied bower,
  It dances in the cascade's spray.

"Ah! why do dark'ning shades conceal
  The hour, when man must cease to be?
Why may not human minds unveil
  The dim mists of futurity?

"The keenness of the world hath torn
  The heart which opens to its blast;
Despis'd, neglected, and forlorn,
  Sinks the wretch in death at last."

She ceased;—the thrilling accents of her interestingly sweet voice died away in the vacancy of stillness;—yet listened the charmed auditors; their imaginations prolonged the tender strain; the uncouth attendants of the stranger were chained in silence, and the enthusiastic gaze of their host was fixed upon the timid countenance of Eloise with wild and mysterious expression. It seemed to say to Eloise, "We meet again;"—and, as the idea struck her imagination, convulsed by a feeling of indescribable and excessive awe, she started.

At last, the hour being late, they all retired. Eloise sought the couch prepared for her; her mind, perturbed by emotions, the cause of which she in vain essayed to develope, could bring its intellectual energies to act on no one particular point; her imagination was fertile, and, under its fantastic guidance, she felt her judgment and

reason irresistibly fettered. The image of the fascinating, yet awful stranger, dwelt on her mind. She sank on her knees to return thanks to her Creator for his mercies; yet even then, faithless to the task on which it was employed, her mind returned to the stranger. She felt no particular affection or esteem for him;—no, she rather feared him; and, when she endeavoured to connect the chain of ideas which pressed upon her mind, tears started into her eyes, and she looked around the apartment with the timid terror of a person who converses at midnight on a subject at once awful and interesting: but poor Eloise was no philosopher; and to explain sensations like these, were even beyond the power of the wisest of them. She felt alarmed, herself, at the violence of the feelings which shook her bosom, and attempted to compose herself to sleep. Yet even in her dream was the stranger present. She thought that she met him on a flowery plain; that the feelings of her bosom, whether she would or not, impelled her towards him; that before she had been enfolded in his arms, a torrent of scintillating flame, accompanied by a terrific crash of thunder, made the earth yawn beneath her feet;—the gay vision vanished from her fancy, and, in place of the flowery plain, a rugged and desolate heath extended far before her; its monotonous solitude unbroken, save by the low and barren rocks which rose occasionally from its surface. From dreams such as these, dreams which left on her mind painful presentiments of her future life, Eloise arose, restless and unrefreshed from slumber.

Why gleams that dark eyeball upon the countenance of Eloise, as she tenderly inquired for the health of her mother? Why did a hidden expression of exulting joy

light up that demoniac gaze, when Madame de St. Irvyne said to her daughter, "I feel rather faint to-day, my child:—'Would we were at Geneva!"—It beams with hell and destruction!—Let me look again: that, when I see another eye which gleams so fiendishly, I may know that it is a villain's.—Thus might have thought the sightless minister of the beneficence of God, as it hovered round the spotless Eloise. But, hush! what was that scream which was heard by the ear of listening enthusiasm? It was the shriek of the fair Eloise's better génius; it screamed to see the foe of the innocent girl so near—it is tied fast to Geneva. "There, Eloise, will we meet again," methought it whispered; whilst a low hollow tone, hoarse from the dank vapours of the grave, seemed lowly to howl in the ear of rapt Fancy, "We meet again likewise."

Their courteous host conducted Madame de St. Irvyne and Eloise to their chaise, which was now repaired, and ready for the journey; the stranger bowed respectfully as they went away. The expression of his dark eye, as he beheld them for the last time, was even stronger than ever; it seemed not to affect her mother; but the mystic feelings which it excited in the bosom of Eloise were beyond description powerful. The paleness of Madame de St. Irvyne's cheek, on which the only teint was an occasional and hectic flush, announced that the illness which consumed her, rapidly increased, and would soon lead her gently to the gates of death. She talked calmly of her approaching dissolution, and only regretted, that to no one protector could she entrust the care of her orphaned daughters. Marianne, her eldest daughter, had, by her mother's particular desire, remained at the chateau; and, though

much wishing to accompany her mother, she urged it no longer, when she knew Madame de St. Irvyne to be resolved against it. Now had the illness which had attacked her assumed so serious and so decided an appearance, that she could no longer doubt the event;—could no longer doubt that she was quickly about to enter a better world.

"My daughter," said she, "there is a banker at Geneva, a worthy man, to whom I shall bequeath the guardianship of my child; on that head are all my doubts quieted. But, Eloise, my child, you are yet young; you know not the world; but bear in mind these words of your dying mother, so long as you remember herself:—When you see a man enveloped in deceit and mystery; when you see him dark, reserved, and suspicious, carefully avoid him. Should such a man seek your friendship or affection, should he seek, by any means, to confer an obligation upon you, or make you confer one on him, spurn him from you as you would a serpent; as one who aimed to lure your unsuspecting innocence to the paths of destruction."

The affecting solemnity of her voice, as thus she spoke, touched Eloise deeply; she wept. "I must remember my mother for ever," was her almost inarticulate reply; deep sobs burst from her agitated bosom; and the varying crowds of imagery which followed each other in her mind, were too complicated to be defined. Still, though deeply grieved at the approaching death of her mother, was the mysterious stranger

uppermost in her thoughts; his image excited ideas painful and unpleasant. She wished to turn the tide of them; but the more she attempted it, with the more painful recurrence of almost *mechanical* force, did his recollection press upon her disturbed intellect.

Eloise de St. Irvyne was a girl, whose temper and disposition was most excellent; she was, indeed, too, possessed of uncommon sensibility; yet was her mind moulded in an inferior degree of perfection. She was susceptible of prejudice, to a great degree; and resigned herself, careless of the consequences which might follow, to the feelings of the moment. Every accomplishment, it is true, she enjoyed in the highest excellence; and the very convent at which she was educated, which afforded the adventitious advantages so highly esteemed by the world, prevented her mind from obtaining that degree of expansiveness and excellence, which, otherwise, might have rendered Eloise nearer approaching to perfection; the very routine of a convent education gave a false and pernicious bias to the ideas, as, luxuriant in youth, they unfolded themselves; and those sentiments which, had they been allowed to take the turn which nature intended, would have become coadjutors of virtue, and strengtheners of that mind, which now they had rendered *comparatively* imbecile. Such was Eloise, and as such she required unexampled care to prevent those feelings which agitate every mind of sensibility, to get the better of the judgment which had, by an erroneous system of education, become relaxed. Her mother was about to die—who now would care for Eloise?

They entered Geneva at the close of a fine, yet sultry day. The illness of Madame de St. Irvyne had increased so as now to threaten instant danger: she was conveyed to bed. A deadly paleness sat on her cheek; it was flushed, however, as she spoke, with momentary hectics; and, as she conversed with her daughter, a fire, which almost partook of etheriality, shone in her sunken eye. It was evening; the yellow beams of the sun, as his orb shed the parting glory on the verge of the horizon, penetrated the bed-curtains; and by their effulgence contrasted the deadliness of her countenance. The poor Eloise sat, watching, with eyes dimmed by tears, each variation in the countenance of her mother. Silent, from an ecstacy of grief, she gazed fixedly upon her, and felt every earthly hope die within her, when the conviction of a fast-approaching dissolution pressed upon her disturbed brain. Madame de St. Irvyne, at length exhausted, fell into a quiet slumber; Eloise feared to disturb her, but, motionless with grief, sate behind the curtain. Now had sunk the orb of day, and the shades of twilight began to scatter duskiness through the chamber of death; all was silent; and, save by the catchings of breath in her mother's slumber, the stillness was uninterrupted. Yet even in this awful, this terrific crisis of her existence, the mind of Eloise seemed compelled to exert its intellectual energies but on one subject;—in vain she essayed to pray;—in vain she attempted to avert the horror of her meditations, by contemplating the pallid features of her dying mother: her thoughts were not within her own control, and she trembled as she reflected on the appalling and mysterious influence which the image of a man, whom she had seen but once, and whom she neither loved nor

cared for, had gained over her mind. With the indefinable terror of one who dreads to behold some phantom, Eloise fearfully cast her eyes around the gloomy apartment; occasionally she shrank from the ideal form which an unconnected imagination had conjured up, and could scarcely but suppose that the *stranger's* gaze, as last he had looked upon her, met her own with an horrible and mixed scintillation of mysterious cunning and interest. She felt no prepossession in his favour; she rather detested him, and gladly would never have again beheld him; yet, were the circumstances which introduced him to their notice alluded to, she would turn pale, and blush, by turns; and Jeanette, their maid, was fully persuaded in her own mind, and prided herself on her penetration in the discovery, that Ma'am'selle was violently in love with the hospitable Alpine hunter.

Madame de St. Irvyne had now awakened; she beckoned her daughter to approach: Eloise obeyed, and, kneeling, kissed the chill hand of her mother, in a transport of sorrow, and bathed it with her tears.

"Eloise," said her mother, her voice trembling from excessive weakness, "Eloise, my child, farewell—farewell for ever. I feel, I am about to die; but, before I die, willingly would I say much to my dearest daughter. You are now left on the hard-hearted, pitiless world; and perhaps, oh! perhaps, about to become an immolated victim of its treachery. Oh!—" Here, overcome by extreme pain, she fell backwards; a transient gleam of animation lighted up her expressive countenance; she

smiled, and—expired. All was still; and over the gloomy chamber reigned silence and horror. The yellow moonbeam, with sepulchral effulgence, gleamed on the countenance of her who had expired, and lighted her features, sweet even in death, with a dire and horrible contrast to the dimness which prevailed around!—Ah! such was the contrast of the peace enjoyed by the spirit of the departed one, with the misery which awaited the wretched Eloise. Poor Eloise! she had now lost almost her only friend!

In excessive and silent grief, knelt the mourning girl; she spoke not, she wept not; her sorrow was too violent for tears, but, oh! her heart was torn by pangs of unspeakable acuteness. But even amid the alarm which so melancholy an event must have excited, the idea of the *stranger in the Alps* sublimed the soul of Eloise to the highest degree of horror, and despair the most infuriate. For the ideas which crowded into her mind at this crisis, so eventful, so terrific, she endeavoured to account; but, alas! her attempt was fruitless! Still knelt she; still did she press to her burning lips the lifeless hand of departed excellence, when the morning's ray announced to her, that longer continuing there might excite suspicion of intellectual derangement. She arose, therefore, and, quitting the apartment, announced the melancholy event which had taken place. She gave orders for the funeral; it was to be solemnized as soon as decency would permit, as the poor friendless Eloise wished speedily to quit Geneva. She wrote to announce the fatal event to her sister. Slowly dragged the time. Eloise followed to its latest bed, the corpse of her mother, and was returning

from the convent, when a stranger put into her hand a note, and quickly disappeared :—

"Will Eloise de St. Irvyne meet her friend at —— Abbey, to-morrow night, at ten o'clock ?"

CHAP. VIII.

—— Why then unbidden gush'd the tear?
\- - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Then would cold shudderings seize his brain,
As gasping he labour'd for breath;
The strange gaze of his meteor eye,
Which, frenzied, and rolling dreadfully,
Glar'd with hideous gleam,
Would chill like the spectre gaze of Death,
As, conjur'd by feverish dream,
He seems o'er the sick man's couch to stand,
And shakes the fell lance in his skeleton hand.

WANDERING JEW.[1]

YES;—they fled from Genoa; they had eluded pursuit and justice, but could not escape the torments of an outraged and avenging conscience, which, with stings the most acute, pursued them whithersoever they might go. Fortune even seemed to favour them; for fortune will, sometimes, in this world, appear to side with the wicked. Wolfstein had received notice, that an uncle, possessed of immense wealth, had died in Bohemia, and bequeathed to him the whole of his estate. Thither then, with Megalena, went Wolfstein. Their journey produced no

[1] For an account of *The Wandering Jew*, see my edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, vol. iv, pp. 317, 318.

event of consequence; suffice it to say, that they arrived at the spot where Wolfstein's new possessions were situated.

Dark and desolate were the scenes which surrounded the no less desolate castle. Gloomy heaths, in unvarying sadness of immensity, stretched far and wide. A scathed pine or oak, blasted by the thunderbolts of heaven, alone broke the monotonous sameness of the imagery. Needless were it to describe the castle, built like all those of the Bohemian barons, in mingled Gothic and barbarian architecture. Over the dark expanse the dim moon beaming, and faintly, with its sepulchral radiance, dispersing the thickness of the vapours which lowered around (for her waning horn, which hung low above the horizon, added but tenfold horror to the terrific desolation of the scene); the night-raven pouring on the dull ear of evening her frightful screams, and breaking on the otherwise uninterrupted stillness,—were the melancholy greetings to their new habitation.

They alighted at the antique entrance, and, passing through a vast and comfortless hall, were conducted into a saloon not much less so. The coolness of the evening, for it was late in the autumn, made the wood fire, which had been lighted, disperse a degree of comfort; and Wolfstein, having arranged his domestic concerns, continued talking with Megalena until midnight.

"But you have never yet correctly explained to me," said Megalena, "the mystery which encircled that strange man whom we met at the inn at Breno. I think I have

seen him once since, or I should not now have thought of the circumstance."

"Indeed, Megalena, I know of no mystery. I suppose the man was mad, or wished to make us think so; for my part, I have never thought of him since; nor ever intend to think of him."

"Do you not?" exclaimed a voice, which enchained motionless to his seat the horror-struck Wolfstein—when turning round, and starting in agonized frenzy from his chair, Ginotti himself—*Ginotti*—from whose terrific gaze never had he turned unappalled, stood in cool and fearless contempt before him!

"Do you not?" continued the mysterious stranger. "Never again intendest thou to think of me?—me! who have watched each expanding idea, conscious to what I was about to apply them, conscious of the great purpose for which each was formed. Ah! Wolfstein, by my agency shalt thou—" He paused, assuming a smile expressive of exultation and superiority.

"Oh! do with me what thou wilt, strange, inexplicable being!—Do with me what thou wilt!" exclaimed Wolfstein, as an ecstacy of frenzied terror overpowered his astonished senses. Megalena still sat unmoved: she was surprised, it is true; but most was she surprised, that an event like this should have power so to shake Wolfstein; for even then he stood gazing in enhorrored silence on the majestic figure of Ginotti.

"Fool, then, that thou art, to deny me!" continued

Ginotti, in a tone less solemn, but more severe. "Wilt thou promise me that, when I come to demand what thou covenantedst with me at Breno, I meet no fears, no scruples, but that, then, thou wilt perform what there thou didst swear, and that *this* oath shall be inviolable?"

"It shall," replied Wolfstein.

"Swear it."

"As I keep my vows with you, may God reward me hereafter!"

"'Tis done then," returned Ginotti. "Ere long shall I claim the performance of this covenant—now farewell." Speaking thus, Ginotti dashed away; and, mounting a horse which stood at the gate, sped swiftly across the heath. His form lessened in the clear moonlight; and, when it was no longer visible to the straining eyeballs of Wolfstein, he felt, as it were, a spell which had enthralled him, to be dissolved.

Reckless of Megalena's earnest entreaties, he threw himself into a chair, in deep and gloomy melancholy; he answered them not, but, immersed in a train of corroding ideas, remained silent. Even when retired to repose, and he could, occasionally, sink into a transitory slumber, would he again start from it, as he thought that Ginotti's majestic form leaned over him, and that the glance which, last, his fearful eye had thrown, chilled his breast with indescribable agony. Slowly lagged the time to Wolfstein: Ginotti, though now gone, and far away perhaps, dwelt in his disturbed

mind; his image was there imprinted in characters terrific and indelible. Oft would he wander along the desolate heath; on every blast of wind which sighed over the scattered remnants of what was once a forest Ginotti's, the terrific Ginotti's voice seemed to float; and in every dusky recess, favoured by the descending shades of gloomy night, his form appeared to lurk, and, with frightful glare, his eye to penetrate the conscience-stricken Wolfstein as he walked. A falling leaf, or a hare starting from her heathy seat, caused him to shrink with affright; yet, though dreading loneliness, he was irresistibly compelled to seek for solitude. Megalena's charms had now no longer power to speak comfort to his soul: ephemeral are the friendships of the wicked, and involuntary disgust follows the attachment founded on the visionary fabric of passion or interest. It sinks in the merited abyss of ennui, or is followed by apathy and carelessness, which amply its origin deserved.

The once ardent and excessive passion of Wolfstein for Megalena, was now changed into disgust and almost detestation; he sought to conceal it from her, but it was evident, in spite of his resolution. He regarded her as a woman capable of the most shocking enormities; since, without any adequate temptation to vice, she had become sufficiently depraved to consider an inconsequent crime the wilful and premeditated destruction of a fellow-creature; still, whether it were from the indolence which he had contracted, or an indefinably sympathetic connexion of soul, which forbade them to part during their mortal existence, was Wolfstein irremediably linked to his mistress, who was as depraved as himself, though

originally of a better disposition. He likewise had, at first, resisted the allurements of vice; but, overpowered by its incitements, had resigned himself, indeed reluctantly, to its influence. But Megalena had courted its advances, and endeavoured to conquer neither the suggestions of crime, nor the dictates of a nature prone to the attacks of *appetite*—let me not call it passion.

Fast advanced winter: cheerless and solitary were the days. Wolfstein, occasionally, followed the chase; but even *that* was wearisome: and the bleeding image of the murdered Olympia, or the still more dreaded idea of the terrific Ginotti, haunted him in the midst of its tumultuous pleasures, and embittered every instant of his existence. The pale corpse too of Cavigni, blackened by poison, reigned in his chaotic imagination, and stung his soul with tenfold remorse, when he reflected that he had murdered one who never had injured him, for the sake of a being whose depraved society every succeeding day rendered more monotonous and insipid.

It was one evening when, according to his custom, Wolfstein wandered late: it was in the beginning of December, and the weather was peculiarly mild for the season and latitude. Over the cerulean expanse of ether the dim moon, shrouded in the fleeting fragments of vapour, which, borne on the pinions of the northern blast, crossed her pale orb; at intervals, the dismal hooting of the owl, which, searching for prey, flitted her white wings over the dusky heath; the silver beams which slept on the outline of the far-seen forests, and the melancholy stillness, uninterrupted save by these concomitants of gloom, conduced to sombre reflection.

Wolfstein reclined upon the heath; he retraced, in mental review, the past events of his life, and shuddered at the darkness of his future destiny. He strove to repent of his crimes; but, though conscious of the connexion which existed between the ideas, as often as repentance presented itself to his mind, Ginotti rushed upon his troubled imagination, and a dark veil seemed to separate him for ever from contrition, notwithstanding he was constantly subjected to the tortures inflicted by it. At last, wearied with the corroding recollections, the acme of which progressively increased, he bent his steps again towards his habitation.

As he was entering the portal, a grasp of iron arrested his arm, and, turning round, he recognised the tall figure of Ginotti, which enveloped in a mantle, had leaned against a jutting buttress. Amazement, for a time, chained the faculties of Wolfstein in motionless surprise: at last he recollected himself, and, in a voice trembling from agitation, inquired, did he now demand the performance of the promise?

"I come," he said, "I come to demand it, Wolfstein! Art thou willing to perform what thou hast promised?—but come——"

A degree of solemnity, mixed with concealed fierceness, toned his voice as he spoke; yet was he fixed in the attitude in which first he had addressed Wolfstein. The pale ray of the moon fell upon his dark features, and his coruscating eye fixed on his trembling victim's countenance, flashed with almost intolerable brilliancy. A chill horror darted through Wolfstein's sickening frame; his brain swam around wildly, and most appalling presentiments of

what was about to happen, pressed upon his agonized intellect. "Yes, yes, I have promised, and I will perform the covenant I have entered into," said Wolfstein; "I swear to you that I will!" and as he spoke, a kind of mechanical and inspired feeling steeled his soul to fortitude; it seemed to arise independently of himself; nor could he, though he eagerly desired to do so, control, in the least, his *own* resolves. Such an impulse as this had first induced him to promise at all. Ah! how often in Ginotti's absence had he resisted it! but when the mysterious disposer of the events of his existence was before him, a consciousness of the inutility of his refusal compelled him to submit to the mandates of a being, whom his heart sickening to acknowledge, it unwillingly confessed as a superior.

"Come," continued Ginotti; "the hour is late, I must dispatch."

Unresisting, yet speaking not, Wolfstein conducted Ginotti to an apartment.

"Bring wine, and light a fire," said he to the servant, who quickly obeyed him. Wolfstein swallowed an overflowing goblet, hoping thereby to acquire courage; for he found that, with every moment of Ginotti's stay, the visionary and awful terrors of his mind augmented.

"Do you not drink?"

"No," replied Ginotti, sullenly.

A pause ensued; during which the eyes of Ginotti,

glaring with demoniacal scintillations, spoke tenfold terrors to the soul of Wolfstein. He knitted his brows and bit his lips, in vain attempting to appear unembarrassed. "Wolfstein!" at last said Ginotti, breaking the fearful silence; "Wolfstein!"

The colour fled from the cheek of his victim, as thus Ginotti spoke: he moved his posture, and awaited, in anxious and horrible solicitude, the declaration which was, as he supposed, to ensue. "My name, my family, and the circumstances which have attended my career through existence, it neither boots you to know, nor me to declare."

"Does it not?" said Wolfstein, scarcely knowing what to say; yet convinced, from the pause, that something was expected.

"No! nor canst thou, nor any other existing being, even attempt to dive into the mysteries which envelope me. Let it be sufficient for you to know, that every event in your life has not only been known to me, but has occurred under my particular machinations."

Wolfstein started. The terror which had blanched his cheek now gave way to an expression of fierceness and surprise; he was about to speak, but Ginotti, noticing not his motion, thus continued:

"Every opening idea which has marked, in so decided and so eccentric an outline, the fiat of your future destiny, has not been unknown to or unnoticed by me. I rejoiced to see in you, whilst young, the progress of that genius

which in mature time would entitle you to the reward which I destine for you, and for you alone. Even when far, far away, when the ocean perhaps has roared between us, have I known your thoughts, Wolfstein; yet have I known them neither by conjecture nor inspiration. Never would your mind have attained that degree of expansion or excellence, had not I watched over its every movement, and taught the sentiment, as it unfolded itself, to despise contented vulgarity. For this, and for an event far more important than any your existence yet has been subjected to, have I watched over you: say, Wolfstein, have I watched in vain?"

Each feeling of resentment vanished from Wolfstein's bosom, as the mysterious intruder spoke: his voice at last died, in a clear and melancholy cadence, away; and his expressive eye, divested of its fierceness and mystery, rested on Wolfstein's countenance with a mild benignity.

"No, no; thou hast not watched in vain, mysterious disposer of my existence. Speak! I burn with curiosity and solicitude to learn for what thou hast thus superintended me:" and as thus he spoke, a feeling of resistless anxiety to know what would be the conclusion of the night's adventure, took place of horror. Inquiringly he gazed on the countenance of Ginotti, the features of whom were brightened with unwonted animation. "Wolfstein," said Ginotti, "often hast thou sworn that I should rest in the grave in peace:—now listen."

CHAP. IX.

If Satan had never fallen,
Hell had been made for thee.
THE REVENGE.

AH! poor, unsuspecting innocence! and is that fair flower about to perish in the blasts of dereliction and unkindness? Demon indeed must he be who could gaze on those mildly-beaming eyes, on that perfect form, the emblem of sensibility, and yet plunge the spotless mind of which it was an index, into a sea of repentance and unavailing sorrow. I should scarce suppose even a demon would act so, were there not many with hearts more depraved even than those of fiends, who first have torn some unsophisticated soul from the pinnacle of excellence, on which it sat smiling, and then triumphed in their hellish victory when it writhed in agonized remorse, and strove to hide its unavailing regret in the dust from which the fabric of her virtues had arisen. "*Ah! I fear me, the unsuspecting girl will go;*" she knows not the malice and the wiles of perjured man—and she is gone!

It was late in the evening, and Eloise had returned

from her mother's funeral, sad and melancholy ; yet even amidst the oppression of grief, surprise and astonishment, pleasure and thankfulness, that any one should notice her, possessed her mind as she read over and over the characters traced on the note which she still held in her hand. The hour was late ; the moon was down, yet countless stars bedecked the almost boundless hemisphere. The mild beams of Hesper slept on the glassy surface of the lake, as, scarcely agitated by the zephyr of evening, its waves rolled in slow succession ; the solemn umbrage of the pine-trees, mingled with the poplar, threw their undefined shadows on the water ; and the nightingale, sitting solitary in the hawthorn, poured on the listening stillness of evening, her grateful lay of melancholy. Hark ! her full strains swell on the silence of night, and now they die away, with lengthened and solemn cadence, insensibly into the breeze, which lingers, with protracted sweep, along the valley. Ah ! with what enthusiastic ecstacy of melancholy does he whose friend, whose dear friend, is far, far away, listen to such strains as these ! perhaps he has heard them with that friend,—with one he loves : never again may they meet his ear. Alas ! 'tis melancholy ; I even now see him sitting on the rock which looks over the lake, in frenzied listlessness ; and counting in mournful review, the days which are past since they fled so quickly with one who was dear to him.

It was to the ruined abbey which stood on the southern side of the lake that, so swiftly, Eloise is hastening. A presentiment of awe filled her mind ; she gazed, in inquiring terror, around her, and scarce could persuade her-

self that shapeless forms lurked not in the gloomy recesses of the scenery.

She gained the abbey; in melancholy fallen grandeur its vast ruins reared their pointed casements to the sky. Masses of disjointed stone were scattered around; and, save by the whirrings of the bats, the stillness which reigned, was uninterrupted. Here then was Eloise to meet the strange one who professed himself to be her friend. Alas! poor Eloise believed him. It yet wanted an hour to the time of appointment; the expiration of that hour Eloise awaited. The abbey brought to her recollection a similar ruin which stood near St. Irvyne; it brought with it the remembrance of a song which Marianne had composed soon after her brother's death. She sang, though in a low voice:

SONG.

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier,
As enanguish'd he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops, to perfection's remembrance, a tear;
When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming,
When no blissful hope on his bosom is beaming,
Or, if lull'd for a while, soon he starts from his dreaming,
And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

Ah! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,
Or summer succeed to the winter of death?
Rest awhile, hapless victim, and Heaven will save
The spirit, that faded away with the breath.
Eternity points in its amaranth bower,
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect lower,
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the dower,
When woe fades away like the mist of the heath.

She ceased: the melancholy cadence of her angelic voice

died in faint reverberations of echo away, and once again reigned stillness.

Now fast approached the hour; and, ere ten had struck, a stranger of towering and gigantic proportions walked along the ruined refectory; without stopping to notice other objects, he advanced swiftly to Eloise, who sat on a misshapen[1] piece of ruin, and, throwing aside the mantle which enveloped his figure, discovered to her astonished sight the stranger of the Alps, who of late had been incessantly present to her mind. Amazement, for a time, chained each faculty in stupefaction; she would have started from her seat, but the stranger, with gentle violence grasping her hand, compelled her to remain where she was.

"Eloise," said the stranger, in a voice of the most fascinating tenderness—"Eloise!"

The softness of his accents changed, in an instant, what was passing in the bosom of Eloise. She felt no surprise that he knew her name; she experienced no dread at this mysterious meeting with a person, at the bare mention of whose name she was wont to tremble: no, the ideas which filled her mind were indefinable. She gazed upon his countenance for a moment, then, hiding her face in her hands, sobbed loudly.

"What afflicts you, Eloise?" said the stranger: "how cruel, that such a breast as thine should be tortured by pain!"

[1] In the original, *mishapen*, as before.

"Ah!" cried Eloise, forgetting that she spoke to a stranger; "how can one avoid sorrow, when there, perhaps, is scarce a being in the world whom I can call my friend; when there is no one on whom I lay claim for protection?"

"Say not, Eloise," cried the stranger, reproachfully, yet benignly; "say not that you can claim none as a friend—you may claim me. Ah! that I had ten thousand existences, that each might be devoted to the service of one whom I love more than myself! Make me then the repository of your every sorrow and secret. I love you, indeed I do, Eloise, and why will you doubt me?"

"I do not doubt you, stranger," replied the unsuspecting girl; "why should I doubt you? for you could have no interest in saying so, if you did not.——I thank you for loving one who is quite, quite friendless; and, if you will allow me to be your friend, I will love you too. I never loved any one, before, but my poor mother and Marianne. Will you then, if you are a friend to me, come and live with me and Marianne, at St. Irvyne's?"

"St. Irvyne's!" exclaimed the stranger, almost convulsively, as he interrupted her; then, as fearing to betray his emotions, he paused, yet quitted not the grasp of Eloise's hand, which trembled within his with feelings which her mind distrusted not.

"Yes, sweet Eloise, I love you indeed." At last he said, affectionately, "And I thank you much for be-

lieving me; but I cannot live with you at St. Irvyne's. Farewell, for to-night, however; for my poor Eloise has need of sleep." He then was quitting the abbey, when Eloise stopped him to inquire his name.

"Frederic de Nempere."

"Ah! then I shall recollect Frederic de Nempere, as the name of a friend, even if I never again behold him."

"Indeed I am not faithless; soon shall I see you again. Farewell, beloved Eloise." Thus saying, with rapid step he quitted the ruin.

Though he was now gone, the sound of his tender farewell yet seemed to linger on the ear of Eloise; but with each moment of his absence, became lessened the conviction of his friendship, and heightened the suspicions which, though unaccountable to herself, possessed her bosom. She could not conceive what motive could have led her to own her love for one whom she feared, and felt a secret terror, from the conviction of the resistless empire which he possessed within her: yet though she shrank from the bare idea of ever becoming his, did she ardently, though scarcely would she own it to herself, desire again to see him.

Eloise now returned to Geneva: she resigned herself to sleep, but even in her dreams was the image of Nempere present to her imagination. Ah! poor deluded Eloise, didst thou think a *man* would merit thy love through disinterestedness? didst thou think that one who

supposed himself superior, yet inferior in reality, to you, in the scale of existent beings, would desire thy society from *love?* yet superior as the fool here supposes himself to be to the creature whom he injures, superior as he boasts himself, he may howl with the fiends of darkness, in never-ending misery, whilst thou shalt receive, at the throne of the God whom thou hast loved, the rewards of that unsuspecting excellence, which he who boasts his superiority, shall *suffer* for trampling upon. Reflect on *this,* ye libertines, and, in the full career of the lasciviousness which has unfitted your souls for enjoying the *slightest* real happiness here or hereafter, tremble! Tremble! I say; for the day of retribution will arrive. But the poor Eloise need not tremble; the victims of your detested cunning need not fear that day: no!—then will the cause of the broken-hearted be avenged, by Him to whom their wrongs cry for redress.

Within a few miles of Geneva, Nempere possessed a country-house: thither did he persuade Eloise to go with him; "For," said he, "though I cannot come to St. Irvyne's, yet my friend will live with me."

"Yes indeed I will," replied Eloise; for whatever she might feel when he was absent, in his presence she felt insensibly softened, and a sentiment nearly approaching to love would, at intervals, take possession of her soul. Yet was it by no means an easy task to lure Eloise from the paths of virtue; it is true she knew but little, nor was the expansion of her mind such as might justify the exultations of a fiend at a triumph over her virtue; yet was it that very timid, simple innocence, which prevented Eloise from understanding to what the deep-laid sophistry

of her false friend tended; and, not understanding it, she could not be influenced by its arguments. Besides, the principles and morals of Eloise were such, as could not *easily* be shaken by the allurements which temptation might throw out to her unsophisticated innocence.

"Why," said Nempere, "are we taught to believe that the union of two who love each other is wicked, unless authorized by certain rites and ceremonials, which certainly cannot change the tenour of sentiments which it is destined that these two people should entertain of each other?"

"It is, I suppose," answered Eloise calmly, "because God has willed it so; besides," continued she, blushing at she knew not what, "it would——"

"And is then the superior and towering soul of Eloise subjected to sentiments and prejudices so stale and vulgar as these?" interrupted Nempere indignantly. "Say, Eloise, do not you think it an insult to two souls, united to each other in the irrefragable covenants of love and congeniality, to promise, in the sight of a Being whom they know not, that fidelity which is certain otherwise?"

"But I do know that Being!" cried Eloise with warmth; "and when I cease to know him, may I die! I pray to him every morning, and, when I kneel at night, I thank him for the mercy which he has shown to a poor friendless girl like me! He is the protector of the friendless, and I love and adore him!"

"Unkind Eloise! how canst thou call thyself friend-

less? Surely, the adoration of two beings unfettered by restraint, must be most acceptable!—But, come, Eloise, this conversation is nothing to the purpose: I see we both think alike, although the *terms* in which we express our sentiments are different. Will you sing to me, dear Eloise?" Willingly did Eloise fetch her harp; she wished not to scrutinize what was passing in her mind, but, after a short prelude, thus began:

SONG.

I.

Ah! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary,
Yet far must the desolate wanderer roam;
Though the tempest is stern, and the mountain is dreary,
She must quit at deep midnight her pitiless home.
I see her swift foot dash the dew from the whortle,
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove of myrtle;
And I hear, as she wraps round her figure the kirtle,
"Stay thy boat on the lake,—dearest Henry, I come."

II.

High swell'd in her bosom the throb of affection,
As lightly her form bounded over the lea,
And arose in her mind every dear recollection:
"I come, dearest Henry, and wait but for thee."
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow is soothing,
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom is moving,
And the mind the mild joys of affection is proving,
Is the stern voice of fate that bids happiness flee!

III.

Oh! dark lower'd the clouds on that horrible eve,
And the moon dimly gleam'd through the tempested air;
Oh! how could fond visions such softness deceive?
Oh! how could false hope rend a bosom so fair?
Thy love's pallid corse the wild surges are laving;
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tempest is raving;
But, fear not, parting spirit; thy goodness is saving,
In eternity's bowers, a seat for thee there.

"How soft is that strain!" cried Nempere, as she concluded.

"Ah!" said Eloise, sighing deeply; "'tis a melancholy song; my poor brother wrote it, I remember, about ten days before he died. 'Tis a gloomy tale concerning him; he ill deserved the fate he met. Some future time I will tell it you; but now, 'tis very late.—Good-night."

Time passed, and Nempere, finding that he must proceed more warily, attempted no more to impose upon the understanding of Eloise by such palpably baseless arguments; yet, so great and so unaccountable an influence had he gained on her unsuspecting soul, that ere long, on the altar of vice, pride, and malice, was immolated the innocence of the spotless Eloise. Ah, ye proud! in the severe consciousness of unblemished reputation, in the fallacious opinion of the world, why turned ye away, as if fearful of contamination, when yon poor frail one drew near? See the tears which steal adown her cheek! —*She* has repented, *ye* have not!

And thinkest thou, libertine, from a principle of depravity—thinkest thou that thou hast raised thyself to the level of Eloise, by trying to sink her to thine own?—No!—Hopest thou that thy curse has passed away unheeded or unseen? The God whom thou hast insulted has marked thee!—In the everlasting tablets of heaven, is thine offence written!—but poor Eloise's crime is obliterated by the mercy of Him, who knows the innocence of her heart.

* * * * * * * * *

Yes—thy sophistry hath prevailed, Nempere!—'tis but blackening the memoir of thine offences!—Hark! what shriek broke upon the enthusiastic silence of twilight?—'Twas the fancied scream of one who loved Éloise long ago, but now is—dead. It warns thee—alas! 'tis unavailing!!—'Tis fled, but not for ever.

It is evening; the moon, which rode in cloudless and unsullied majesty, in the leaden-coloured east, hath hidden her pale beams in a dusky cloud, as if blushing to contemplate a scene of so much wickedness.

'Tis done; and amidst the vows of a transitory delirium of pleasure, regret, horror, and misery, arise! they shake their Gorgon locks at Eloise! appalled she shudders with affright, and shrinks from the contemplation of the consequences of her imprudence. Beware, Eloise!—a precipice, a frightful precipice yawns at thy feet! advance yet a step further, and thou perishest!—No, give not up thy religion—it is that alone which can support thee under the miseries, with which imprudence has so darkly marked the progress of thine existence!

CHAP. X.

The elements respect their Maker's seal!
  Still like the scathed pine-tree's height,
  Braving the tempests of the night,
Have I 'scap'd the bickering flame.
Like the scath'd pine, which a monument stands
Of faded grandeur, which the brands
  Of the tempest-shaken air
Have riven on the desolate heath;
Yet it stands majestic even in death,
  And rears its wild form there.

WANDERING JEW.[1]

YET, in an attitude of attention, Wolfstein was fixed, and, gazing upon Ginotti's countenance, awaited his narrative.

"Wolfstein," said Ginotti, "the circumstances which I am about to communicate to you are, many of them, you may think, trivial; but I must be minute, and, however the recital may excite your astonishment, suffer me to proceed without interruption."

Wolfstein bowed affirmatively—Ginotti thus proceeded:—

"From my earliest youth, before it was quenched by

[1] See note at p. 248.

complete satiation, *curiosity*, and a desire of unveiling the latent mysteries of nature, was the passion by which all the other emotions of my mind were intellectually organized. This desire first led me to cultivate, and with success, the various branches of learning which led to the gates of wisdom. I then applied myself to the cultivation of philosophy, and the éclât with which I pursued it, exceeded my most sanguine expectations. *Love* I cared not for; and wondered why men perversely sought to ally themselves with weakness. Natural philosophy at last became the peculiar science to which I directed my eager inquiries; thence was I led into a train of labyrinthic meditations. I thought of *death*—I shuddered when I reflected, and shrank in horror from the idea, *selfish and self-interested* as I was, of entering a new existence to which I was a stranger. I must either dive into the recesses of futurity, or I must not, I cannot die.—'Will not this nature—will not the *matter* of which it is composed, exist to all eternity? Ah! I know it will; and, by the exertions of the energies with which nature has gifted me, well I know it shall.' This was my opinion at that time: I then believed that there existed no God. Ah! at what an exorbitant price have I bought the conviction that there is one!!! Believing that priestcraft and superstition were all the religion which *man* ever practised, it could not be supposed that I thought there existed supernatural beings of any kind. I believed *nature* to be self-sufficient and excelling; I supposed not, therefore, that there could be anything beyond nature.

"I was now about seventeen: I had dived into the depths of metaphysical calculations. With sophistical

arguments had I convinced myself of the non-existence of a First Cause, and, by every combined modification of the essences of matter, had I apparently proved that no existences could possibly be, unseen by human vision. I had lived, hitherto, completely for myself; I cared not for others; and, had the hand of fate swept from the list of the living every one of my youthful associates, I should have remained immoved and fearless. I had not a friend in the world;—I cared for nothing but *self*. Being fond of calculating the effects of poison, I essayed one, which I had composed, upon a youth who had offended me; he lingered a month, and then expired in agonies the most terrific. It was returning from his funeral, which all the students of the college where I received my education (Salamanca), had attended, that a train of the strangest thought pressed upon my mind. I feared, more than ever, now, to die; and, although I had no right to form hopes or expectations for longer life than is allotted to the rest of mortals, yet did I think it were possible to protract existence. And why, reasoned I with myself, relapsing into melancholy, why am I to suppose that these muscles or fibres are made of stuff more durable than those of other men? I have no right to suppose otherwise than that, at the end of the time allotted by nature, for the existence of the atoms which compose my being, I must, like all other men, perish, perhaps everlastingly.—Here in the bitterness of my heart, I cursed that nature and chance which I believed in; and, in a paroxysmal frenzy of contending passions, cast myself, in desperation, at the foot of a lofty ash-tree, which reared its fantastic form over a torrent which dashed below.

"It was midnight; far had I wandered from Sala-

manca; the passions which agitated my brain, almost to delirium, had added strength to my nerves, and swiftness to my feet; but after many hours' incessant walking, I began to feel fatigued. No moon was up, nor did one star illume the hemisphere. The sky was veiled by a thick covering of clouds; and, to my heated imagination, the winds, which in stern cadence swept along the night-scene, whistled tidings of death and annihilation. I gazed on the torrent, foaming beneath my feet; it could scarcely be distinguished through the thickness of the gloom, save at intervals, when the white-crested waves dashed at the base of the bank on which I stood. 'Twas then that I contemplated self-destruction; I had almost plunged into the tide of death, had rushed upon the unknown regions of eternity, when the soft sound of a bell from a neighbouring convent, was wafted in the stillness of the night. It struck a chord in unison with my soul; it vibrated on the secret springs of rapture. I thought no more of suicide, but, reseating myself at the root of the ash-tree, burst into a flood of tears;—never had I wept before; the sensation was new to me; it was inexplicably pleasing. I reflected by what rules of science I could account for it: *there* philosophy failed me. I acknowledged its inefficacy; and, almost at *that* instant, allowed the existence of a superior and beneficent *Spirit*, in whose image is made the soul of man; but quickly chasing these ideas, and, overcome by excessive and unwonted fatigue of mind and body, I laid my head upon a jutting projection of the tree, and, forgetful of everything around me, sank into a profound and quiet slumber. Quiet, did I say? No—It was not quiet. I dreamed that I stood on the brink of a most terrific precipice, far,

far above the clouds, amid whose dark forms which lowered beneath, was seen the dashing of a stupendous cataract: its roarings were borne to mine ear by the blast of night. Above me rose, fearfully embattled and rugged, fragments of enormous rocks, tinged by the dimly gleaming moon; their loftiness, the grandeur of their misshapen[1] proportions, and their bulk, staggering the imagination; and scarcely could the mind itself scale the vast loftiness of their aërial summits. I saw the dark clouds pass by, borne by the impetuosity of the blast, yet felt no wind myself. Methought darkly gleaming forms rode on their almost palpable prominences.

"Whilst thus I stood, gazing on the expansive gulf which yawned before me, methought a silver sound stole on the quietude of night. The moon became as bright as polished silver, and each star sparkled with scintillations of inexpressible whiteness. Pleasing images stole imperceptibly upon my senses, when a ravishingly sweet strain of dulcet melody seemed to float around. Now it was wafted nearer, and now it died away in tones to melancholy dear. Whilst I thus stood enraptured, louder swelled the strain of seraphic harmony; it vibrated on my inmost soul, and a mysterious softness lulled each impetuous passion to repose. I gazed in eager anticipation of curiosity on the scene before me; for a mist of silver radiance rendered every object but myself imperceptible; yet was it brilliant as the noon-day sun. Suddenly, whilst yet the full strain swelled along the empyrean sky, the mist in one place seemed to dispart, and, through it, to roll clouds of deepest crimson. Above

[1] In the original, *mishapen*.

them, and seemingly reclining on the viewless air, was a form of most exact and superior symmetry. Rays of brilliancy, surpassing expression, fell from his burning eye, and the emanations from his countenance tinted the transparent clouds below with silver light. The phantasm advanced towards me; it seemed then, to my imagination, that his figure was borne on the sweet strain of music which filled the circumambient air. In a voice which was fascination itself, the being addressed me, saying, 'Wilt thou come with me? wilt thou be mine?' I felt a decided wish never to be his. 'No, no,' I unhesitatingly cried, with a feeling which no language can either explain or describe. No sooner had I uttered these words, than methought a sensation of deadly horror chilled my sickening frame; an earthquake rocked the precipice beneath my feet; the beautiful being vanished; clouds, as of chaos, rolled around, and from their dark masses flashed incessant meteors.[1] I heard a deafening noise on every side; it appeared like the dissolution of nature; the blood-red moon, whirled from her sphere, sank beneath the horizon. My neck was grasped firmly, and, turning round in an agony of horror, I beheld a form more hideous than the imagination of man is capable of portraying, whose proportions, gigantic and deformed, were seemingly blackened by the inerasible traces of the thunderbolts of God; yet in its hideous and detestable countenance, though seemingly far different, I thought I could recognise that of the lovely vision: 'Wretch!' it exclaimed, in a voice of exulting thunder; 'saidst thou that thou wouldst not be mine? Ah!

[1] This is one of several passages which it is curious to compare with *Queen Mab*. In this instance see Poetical Works, vol. iv, p. 393—

a bolt
Flashing incessant meteors.

'thou art mine beyond redemption; and I triumph in 'the conviction, that no power can ever make thee 'otherwise. Say, art thou willing to be mine?' Saying this, he dragged me to the brink of the precipice: the contemplation of approaching death frenzied my brain to the highest pitch of horror. 'Yes, yes, I am thine,' I exclaimed. No sooner had I pronounced these words, than the visionary scene vanished, and I awoke. But even when awake, the contemplation of what I had suffered, whilst under the influence of sleep, pressed upon my disordered fancy; my intellect, wild with unconquerable emotions, could fix on no one particular point to exert its energies; they were strained beyond their power of exerting.

"Ever, from that day, did a deep-corroding melancholy usurp the throne of my soul. At last, during the course of my philosophical inquiries, I ascertained the method by which *man* might exist for ever, and it was connected with my dream. It would unfold a tale of too much horror to trace, in review, the circumstances as then they occurred; suffice it to say, that I became acquainted that a *superior* being really exists: and ah! how dear a price have I paid for the knowledge! To one man, alone, Wolfstein, may I communicate this secret of immortal life: then must I forego *my* claim to it,—and oh! with what pleasure shall I forego it! To you I bequeath the secret; but first you must swear that if - - - - - - - - - - you wish God may - "

"I swear," cried Wolfstein, in a transport of delight; burning ecstacy revelled through his veins; pleasurable

coruscations were emitted from his eyes. "I swear," continued he; "and if ever - - - - - - - - - - may God - "

"Needless were it for me," continued Ginotti, "to expatiate further upon the *means* which I have used to become master over your every action; that will be sufficiently explained when you have followed my directions. Take," continued Ginotti, "———— and ———— and ————; mix them according to the directions which this book will communicate to you. Seek, at midnight, the ruined abbey near the castle of St. Irvyne, in France; and there—I need say no more—there you will meet with me."

CHAP. XI.

THE varying occurrences of time and change, which bring anticipation of better days, brought none to the hapless Eloise. Nempere now having gained the point which his villany had projected, felt little or no attachment left for the unhappy victim of his baseness; he treated her indeed most cruelly, and his unkindness added greatly to the severity of her afflictions. One day, when, weighed down by the extreme asperity of her woes, Eloise sat leaning her head on her hand, and mentally retracing, in sickening and mournful review, the concatenated occurrences which had led her to become what she was, she sought to change the bent of her ideas, but in vain. The feelings of her soul were but exacerbated by the attempt to quell them. Her dear brother's death, that brother so tenderly beloved, added a sting to her sensations. Was there any one on earth to whom she was now attracted by a wish of pouring in the friend's bosom ideas and feelings indefinable to any one else? Ah, no! that friend existed not; never, never more would she know such a friend. Never did she really love any one; and now had she sacrificed her conviction of right and wrong to a man who neither knew how to appreciate her excel-

lence, nor was adequate to excite other sensation than of terror and dread.

Thus were her thoughts engaged, when Nempere entered the apartment, accompanied by a gentleman, whom he unceremoniously announced as the Chevalier Mountfort, an Englishman of rank, and his friend. He was a man of handsome countenance and engaging manners. He conversed with Eloise with an ill-disguised conviction of his own superiority, and seemed indeed to assert, as it were, a right of conversing with her; nor did Nempere appear to dispute his apparent assumption. The conversation turned upon music; Mountfort asked Eloise her opinion; "Oh!" said Eloise, enthusiastically, "I think it sublimes the soul to heaven; I think it is, of all earthly pleasures, the most excessive. Who, when listening to harmoniously-arranged sounds of music, exists there, but must forget his woes, and lose the memory of every earthly existence in the ecstatic emotions which it excites? Do you not think so, Chevalier?" said she; for the liveliness of his manner enchanted Eloise, whose temper, naturally elastic and sprightly, had been damped as yet by misery and seclusion. Mountfort smiled at the energetic avowal of her feelings; for, whilst she yet spoke, her expressive countenance became irradiated by the emanation of sentiment.

"Yes," said Mountfort, "it is indeed powerfully efficient to excite the interests of the soul; but does it not, by the very act of resuscitating the feelings, by working upon the, perhaps, long dead chords of secret

and enthusiastic rapture, awaken the powers of grief as well as pleasure ?"

"Ah! it may do both," said Eloise, sighing.

He approached her at that instant. Nempere arose, as if intentionally, and left the room. Mountfort pressed her hand to his heart with earnestness: he kissed it, and then resigning it, said, "No, no, spotless untainted Eloise; untainted even by surrounding depravity:—not for worlds would I injure you. Oh! I can conceal it no longer—will conceal it no longer—Nempere is a villain."

"Is he ?" said Eloise, apparently resigned, *now*, to the severest shocks of fortune: "then, then indeed I know not with whom to seek an asylum. Methinks all are villains."

"Listen then, injured innocence, and reflect in whom thou hast confided. Ten days ago, in the gaming-house at Geneva, Nempere was present. He engaged in play with me, and I won of him considerable sums. He told me that he could not pay me now, but that he had a beautiful girl whom he would give to me, if I would release him from the obligation. 'Est elle une fille de joye ?' I inquired. 'Oui, et de vertu praticable.' This quieted my conscience. In a moment of licentiousness, I acceded to his proposal; and, as money is almost valueless to me, I tore the bond for three thousand zechins: but did I think that an angel was to be sacrificed to the degraded avarice of the being to whom her

fate was committed? By heavens, I will this moment seek him,—upbraid him with his inhuman depravity,—and——" "Oh! stop, stop," cried Eloise, "do not seek him; all, all is well—I will leave him. Oh! how I thank you, stranger, for this unmerited pity to a wretch who is, alas! too conscious that she deserves it not."—"Ah! you deserve every thing," interrupted the impassioned Mountfort; "you deserve paradise. But leave this perjured villain; and do not say, unkind fair-one, that you have no friend; indeed you have a most warm, disinterested friend in me."—"Ah! but," said Eloise, hesitatingly, "what will the——"

"World say," she was about to have added; but the conviction of having so lately and so flagrantly violated every regard to its opinion—she only sighed. "Well," continued Mountfort, as if not perceiving her hesitation; "you will accompany me to a cottage ornée which I possess at some little distance hence? Believe that your situation shall be treated with the deference which it requires; and, however I may have yielded to habitual licentiousness, I have too much honour to disturb the sorrows of one who is a victim to that of another." Licentious and free as had been the career of Mountfort's life, it was by no means the result of a nature naturally prone to vice; it had been owing to the unchecked sallies of an imagination not sufficiently refined. At the desolate situation of Eloise, however, every good propensity in his nature urged him to take compassion on her. His heart, originally susceptible of the finest feelings, was touched, and he really and sincerely—yes, a libertine, but not one from principle, sincerely meant what he said.

"Thanks, generous stranger," said Eloise, with energy; "indeed I *do* thank you." For not yet had acquaintance with the world sufficiently bidden Eloise distrust the motives of its disciples. "I accept your offer, and only hope that my compliance may not induce you to regard me otherwise than I am."

"Never, never can I regard you as other than a suffering angel," replied the impassioned Mountfort. Eloise blushed at what the energetic force of Mountfort's manner assured her was not intended as a compliment.

"But may I ask my generous benefactor, *how*, *where*, and *when* am I to be released?"

"Leave that to me," returned Mountfort: "be ready to-morrow night at ten o'clock. A chaise will wait beneath."

Nempere soon entered; their conversation was uninterrupted, and the evening passed away uninteresting and slow.

Swiftly fled the intervening hours, and fast advanced the moment when Eloise was about to try, again, the compassion of the world. Night came, and Eloise entered the chaise; Mountfort leaped in after her. For a while her agitation was excessive. Mountfort at last succeeded in calming her; "Why, my dearest Ma'am'selle," said he, "why will you thus needlessly agitate yourself? I *swear* to hold your honour far dearer than my own life; and my companion ——"

"What companion?" Eloise interrupted him, inquiringly.

"Why," replied he, "a friend of mine, who lives at my cottage; he is an Irishman, and so *very* moral, and so averse to every species of *gaieté de cœur*, that you need be under no apprehensions. In short, he is a love-sick swain, without ever having found what he calls a *congenial* female. He wanders about, writes poetry, and, in short, is much *too sentimental* to occasion you any alarm on that account. And, I assure you," added he, assuming a more serious tone, "although I may not be quite so far gone in romance, yet I have feelings of honour and humanity which teach me to respect your sorrows as my own."

"Indeed, indeed I believe you, generous stranger; nor do I think that you *could* have a friend whose principles are dishonourable."

Whilst yet she spoke, the chaise stopped, and Mountfort, springing from it, handed Eloise into his habitation. It was neatly fitted up in the English taste.

"Fitzeustace," said Mountfort to his friend, "allow me to introduce you to Madame Eloise de ——." Eloise blushed, as did Fitzeustace.

"Come," said Fitzeustace, to conquer *mauvaise honte*, "supper is ready, and the lady doubtlessly fatigued."

Fitzeustace was finely formed, yet there was a languor which pervaded even his whole figure; his eyes were dark

and expressive, and as, occasionally, they met those of Eloise, gleamed with excessive brilliancy, awakened doubtlessly by curiosity and interest. He said but little during supper, and left to his more vivacious friend the whole of Eloise's conversation, who animated at having escaped a persecutor, and one she hated, displayed extreme command of social powers. Yes, once again was Eloise vivacious: the sweet spirit of social intercourse was not dead within,—that spirit which illumes even slavery, which makes its horrors less terrific, and is not annihilated in the dungeon itself.

At last arrived the hour of retiring.—Morning came.

The cottage was situated in a beautiful valley. The odorous perfume of roses and jasmine wafted on the zephyr's wing, the flowery steep which rose before it, and the umbrageous loveliness of the surrounding country, rendered it a spot the most fitted for joyous seclusion. Eloise wandered out with Mountfort and his friend to view it; and so accommodating was her spirit, that, ere long, Fitzeustace became known to her as familiarly as if they had been acquainted all their lives.

Time fled on, and each day seemed only to succeed the other purposely to vary the pleasures of this delightful retreat. Eloise sung in the summer evenings, and Fitzeustace, whose taste for music was most exquisite, accompanied her on his oboe.

By degrees the society of Fitzeustace, to which before she had preferred Mountfort's, began to be more interesting. He insensibly acquired a power over the heart of Eloise,

which she herself was not aware of. She involuntarily almost sought his society; and when, which frequently happened, Mountfort was absent at Geneva, her sensations were indescribably ecstatic in the society of his friend. She sat in mute, in silent rapture, listening to the notes of his oboe, as they floated on the stillness of evening: she feared not for the future, but, as it were, in a dream of rapturous delight, supposed that she must ever be as now—happy; not reflecting that, were he who caused that happiness absent, it would exist no longer.

Fitzeustace madly, passionately doted on Eloise: in all the energy of incontaminated nature, he sought but the happiness of the object of his whole affections. He sought not to investigate the causes of his woe; sufficient was it for him to have found one who could *understand*, could *sympathize in*, the feelings and sensations which every child of nature whom the world's refinements and luxury have not vitiated, must feel,—that affection, that contempt of selfish gratification, which every one whose soul towers at all above the multitude, must acknowledge. He destined Eloise, in his secret soul, for his own. He resolved to die—he wished to live with her; and would have purchased one instant's happiness for her with ages of hopeless torments to be inflicted on himself. He loved her with passionate and excessive tenderness: were he absent from her but a moment, he would sigh with love's impatience for her return; yet he feared to avow his flame, lest this, perhaps, baseless dream of rapturous and enthusiastic happiness might fade;—then, indeed, Fitzeustace felt that he must die.

Yet was Fitzeustace mistaken: Eloise loved him with

all the tenderness of innocence; she confided in him unreservedly; and, though unconscious of the nature of the love she felt for him, returned each enthusiastically energetic prepossession of his towering mind with ardour excessive and unrestrained. Yet did Fitzeustace suppose that she loved him not. Ah! why did he think so?

Late one evening, Mountfort had gone to Geneva, and Fitzeustace wandered with Eloise towards that spot which Eloise selected as their constant evening ramble on account of its superior beauty. The tall ash and oak, in mingled umbrage, sighed far above their heads; beneath them were walks, artificially cut, yet imitating nature. They wandered on, till they came to a pavilion which Mountfort had caused to be erected. It was situated on a piece of land entirely surrounded by water, yet peninsulated by a rustic bridge which joined it to the walk.

Hither, urged mechanically, for their thoughts were otherwise employed, wandered Eloise and Fitzeustace. Before them hung the moon in cloudless majesty; her orb was reflected by every movement of the crystalline water, which, agitated by the gentle zephyr, rolled tranquilly. Heedless yet of the beauties of nature, the loveliness of the scene, they entered the pavilion.

Eloise convulsively pressed her hand on her forehead.

"What is the matter, my dearest Eloise?" inquired Fitzeustace, whom awakened tenderness had thrown off his guard.

"Oh! nothing, nothing; but a momentary faintness. It will soon go off; let us sit down."

They entered the pavilion.

"'Tis nothing but drowsiness," said Eloise, affecting gaiety; "'twill soon go off. I sate up late last night; that I believe was the occasion."

"Recline on this sofa, then," said Fitzeustace, reaching another pillow to make the couch easier; "and I will play some of those Irish tunes which you admire so much."

Eloise reclined on the sofa, and Fitzeustace, seated on the floor, began to play; the melancholy plaintiveness of his music touched Eloise; she sighed, and concealed her tears in her handkerchief. At length she sunk into a profound sleep: still Fitzeustace continued playing, noticing not that she slumbered. He now perceived that she spoke, but in so low a tone, that he knew she slept.

He approached. She lay wrapped in sleep; a sweet and celestial smile played upon her countenance, and irradiated her features with a tenfold expression of etheriality. Suddenly the visions of her slumbers appeared to have changed; the smile yet remained, but its expression was melancholy; tears stole gently from under her eyelids:—she sighed.

Ah! with what eagerness of ecstacy did Fitzeustace lean over her form! He dared not speak, he dared not

move; but pressing a ringlet of hair which had escaped its band, to his lips, waited silently.

"Yes, yes; I think—it may—" at last she muttered; but so confusedly, as scarcely to be distinguishable.

Fitzeustace remained rooted in rapturous attention, listening.

"I thought, I thought he looked as if he could love me," scarcely articulated the sleeping Eloise. "Perhaps, though he may not love me, he may allow me to love him.—Fitzeustace!"

On a sudden, again were changed the visions of her slumbers; terrified she started from sleep, and cried, "Fitzeustace!"

CHAP. XII.

For love is heaven, and heaven is love.
LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

NEEDLESS were it to expatiate on their transports; they loved each other, and that is enough for those who have felt like Eloise and Fitzeustace.

One night, rather later indeed than it was Mountfort's custom to return from Geneva, Eloise and Fitzeustace sat awaiting his arrival. At last it was too late any longer even to expect him; and Eloise was about to bid Fitzeustace good-night, when a knock at the door aroused them. Instantly, with a hurried and disordered step, his clothes stained with blood, his countenance convulsed and pallid as death, in rushed Mountfort.

An involuntary exclamation of surprise burst from the terrified Eloise.

"What—what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing!" answered Mountfort, in a

tone of hurried, yet desperate agony. The wildness of his looks contradicted his assertions. Fitzeustace, who had been inquiring whether he was wounded, on finding that he was not, flew to Eloise.

"Oh! go, go!" she exclaimed. "Something, I am convinced, is wrong.—Tell me, dear Mountfort, what it is—in pity tell me."

"Nempere is dead!" replied Mountfort, in a voice of deliberate desperation; then, pausing for an instant, he added in an under tone, "And the officers of justice are in pursuit of me. Adieu, Eloise!—Adieu, Fitzeustace! You know I must part with you—you know how unwillingly.—My address is at—London.—Adieu—once again adieu!"

Saying this, as by a convulsive effort of despairing energy, he darted from the apartment, and mounting a horse which stood at the gate, swiftly sped away. Fitzeustace well knew the impossibility of his longer stay; he did not seem surprised, but sighed.

"Ah! well I know," said Eloise, violently agitated, "I well know myself to be the occasion of these misfortunes. Nempere sought for me; the generous Mountfort would not give me up, and now is he compelled to fly—perhaps may not even escape with life. Ah! I fear it is destined that every friend must suffer in the fatality which environs me. Fitzeustace!" she uttered this with such tenderness, that, almost involuntarily, he clasped her hand, and pressed it to his bosom, in the silent, yet ex-

pressive enthusiasm of love. "Fitzeustace! you will not likewise desert the poor isolated Eloise?"

"Say not isolated, dearest love. Can, can you fear, my love, whilst your Fitzeustace exists? Say, adored Eloise, shall we *now* be united, *never, never* to part again? Say, will you consent to our immediate union?"

"Know you not," exclaimed Eloise, in a low, faltering voice, "know you not that I *have been* another's?"

"Oh! suppose me not," interrupted the impassioned Fitzeustace, "the slave of such vulgar and narrow-minded prejudice. Does the frightful vice and ingratitude of Nempere sully the spotless excellence of my Eloise's soul?—No, no,—that must ever continue uncontaminated by the frailty of the body in which it is enshrined. It must rise superior to the earth: 'tis that which I adore, Eloise. Say, say, was *that* Nempere's?"

"Oh! no, never!" cried Eloise, with energy. "Nothing but *fear* was Nempere's."

"Then why say you that ever you were *his?*" said Fitzeustace, reproachfully. "You never *could* have been his, destined as you were for mine, from the first instant the particles composing the soul which I adore, were assimilated by the God whom I worship."

"Indeed, believe me, dearest Fitzeustace, I love you, far beyond any thing existing—indeed, existence were valueless, unless enjoyed with you!"

Eloise, though a *something* prevented her from avowing them, *felt* the enthusiastic and sanguine ideas of Fitzeustace to be true: her soul, susceptible of the most exalted virtue and expansion, though cruelly nipped in its growth, thrilled with delight unexperienced before, when she found a being who could understand and perceive the truth of her feelings, and indeed *anticipate* them, as did Fitzeustace; and *he*, while gazing on the index of that soul, which associated with his, and animated the body of Eloise, but for him, felt delight, which, glowing and enthusiastic as had been his picture of happiness, he never expected to know. His dark and beautiful eye gleamed with tenfold lustre; his every nerve, his every pulse, confessed the awakened consciousness, that *she*, on whom his soul had doted, ever since he acknowledged the existence of his intellectuality, was present before him.

A short space of time passed, and Eloise gave birth to the son of Nempere. Fitzeustace cherished it with the affection of a father, and, when occasionally he necessarily must be absent from the apartment of his beloved Eloise, his whole delight was to gaze on the child, and trace in its innocent countenance the features of the mother who was so beloved by him.

Time no longer dragged heavily to Eloise and Fitzeustace: happy in the society of each other, they wished nor wanted other joys; united by the laws of

their God, and assimilated by congeniality of sentiment, they supposed that each succeeding month must be like this, must pass like this, in the full satiety of every innocent union of mental enjoyment. While thus the time sped in rapturous succession of delight, autumn advanced.

The evening was late, when, at the usual hour, Eloise and Fitzeustace took the way to their beloved pavilion. Fitzeustace was unusually desponding, and his ideas for futurity were marked by the melancholy of his mind. Eloise, in vain, attempted to soothe him; the contention of his mind was but too visible. She led him to the pavilion. They entered it. The autumnal moon had risen; her dimly-gleaming orb, scarcely now visible, was shrouded in the duskiness of the atmosphere: like the spirit of the spotless ether, which shrinks from the obtrusive gaze of man, she hung behind a leaden-coloured[1] cloud. The wind in low and melancholy whispering sighed among the branches of the towering trees; the melody of the nightingale, which floated upon its dying cadences, alone broke on the solemnity of the scene. Lives there, whose soul experiences no degree of delight, is susceptible of no gradations of feelings, at change of scenery? Lives there, who can listen to the cadence of the evening zephyr, and not acknowledge, in his mind, the sensations of celestial melancholy which it

[1] The epithet *leaden coloured*, as here applied, interests as indicating an early stage in the growth of that wondrous poetic apparatus, afterwards more highly elaborated and more replete with set phrases than that of any other poet, so wholly the channel of true inspiration. In *Alastor*, line 557 (Vol. I, p. 41), we have *leaden-coloured even*; and in *Prometheus Unbound*, Act I, line 47 (Vol II, p. 151), *The leaden-coloured east*.

awakens ? for, if he does, his life were valueless, his death were undeplored. Ambition, avarice, ten thousand mean, ignoble passions, had extinguished within him that soft, but indefinable sensorium of unallayed delight, with which his soul, whose susceptibility is not destroyed by the demands of selfish appetite, thrills exultingly, and wants but the union of another, of whom the feelings are in unison with his own, to constitute almost insupportable delight.

Let Epicureans argue, and say, "There is no pleasure but in the gratification of the senses." Let them enjoy their own opinion ; I want not *pleasure*, when I can enjoy *happiness*. Let Stoics say, " Every idea that there are fine feelings, is weak ; he who yields to them is even weaker." Let those too, wise in their own conceit, indulge themselves in sordid and degrading hypotheses ; let them suppose human nature capable of no influence from any thing but materiality ; so long as I enjoy the innocent and *congenial* delight, which it were needless to define to those who are strangers to it, I am satisfied.

" Dear Fitzeustace," said Eloise, " tell me what afflicts you ; why are you so melancholy ?—Do not we mutually love, and have we not the unrestrained enjoyment of each other's society ? "

Fitzeustace sighed deeply ; he pressed Eloise's hand. " Why does my dearest Eloise suppose that I am unhappy ? " The tone of his voice was tremulous, and a deadly settled paleness dwelt on his cheek.

"Are you not unhappy, then, Fitzeustace?"

"[1]I know I ought not to be so," he replied, with a faint smile;—he paused—"Eloise," continued Fitzeustace, "I know I ought not to grieve, but you will, perhaps, pardon me when I say, that a father's curse, whether from the prejudice of education, or the innate consciousness of its horror, agitates my mind. I cannot leave you, I cannot go to England; and will you then leave your country, Eloise, to accommodate me? No, I do not, I ought not to expect it."

"Oh! with pleasure; what is country? what is every thing without you? Come, my love, dismiss these fears, we yet may be happy."

"But before we go to England, before my father will see us, it is necessary that we should be married—nay, do not start, Eloise; I view it in the light that you do; I consider it an human institution, and incapable of furnishing that bond of union by which alone can intellect be conjoined; I regard it as but a chain, which, although it keeps the body bound, still leaves the soul unfettered: it is not so with love. But still, Eloise, to those who think like us, it is at all events harmless; 'tis but yielding to the prejudices of the world wherein we live, and procuring moral expediency, at a slight sacrifice of what we conceive to be right."

"Well, well, it shall be done, Fitzeustace," resumed

[1] The inverted commas here are wanting in the original, as are those at the end of the next paragraph but one.

Eloise; "but take the assurance of *my* promise that I cannot love you more."

They soon agreed on a point of, in their eyes, so trifling importance, and arriving in England, tasted that happiness, which love and innocence alone can give. Prejudice may triumph for a while, but virtue will be eventually the conqueror.

CONCLUSION.

It was night—all was still; not a breeze dared to move, not a sound to break the stillness of horror. Wolfstein has arrived at the village near which St. Irvyne stood; he has sped him to the château, and has entered the edifice; the garden door was open, and he entered the vaults.

For a time, the novelty of his situation, and the painful recurrence of past events, which, independently of his own energies, would gleam upon his soul, rendered him too much confused to investigate minutely the recesses of the cavern. Arousing himself, at last, however, from this momentary suspension of faculty, he paced the vaults in eager desire for the arrival of midnight. How inexpressible was his horror when he fell on a body which appeared motionless and without life! He raised it in his arms, and, taking it to the light, beheld, pallid in death, the features of Megalena. The laugh of anguish which had convulsed her expiring frame, still played around her mouth, as a smile of horror and despair; her hair was loose and wild, seemingly gathered in knots by the convulsive grasp of dissolution. She moved not; his soul was nerved by almost superhuman powers; yet

the ice of despair chilled his burning brain. Curiosity, resistless curiosity, even in a moment such as this, reigned in his bosom. The body of Megalena was breathless, and yet no visible cause could be assigned for her death. Wolfstein dashed the body convulsively on the earth, and, wildered by the suscitated energies of his soul almost to madness, rushed into the vaults.

Not yet had the bell announced the hour of midnight. Wolfstein sate on a projecting mass of stone; his frame trembled with a burning anticipation of what was about to occur; a thirst of knowledge scorched his soul to madness; yet he stilled his wild energies,—yet he awaited in silence the coming of Ginotti. At last the bell struck; Ginotti came; his step was rapid, and his manner wild; his figure was wasted almost to a skeleton, yet it retained its loftiness and grandeur; still from his eye emanated that indefinable expression which ever made Wolfstein shrink appalled. His cheek was sunken and hollow, yet was it flushed by the hectic of despairing exertion. "Wolfstein," he said, "Wolfstein, part is past—the hour of agonizing horror is past; yet the dark and icy gloom of desperation braces this soul to fortitude;—but come, let us to business." He spoke, and threw his mantle on the ground. "I am blasted to endless torment," muttered the mysterious. "Wolfstein, dost thou deny thy Creator?"—"Never, never."—"Wilt thou not?"—"No, no,—anything but that."

Deeper grew the gloom of the cavern. Darkness almost visible seemed to press around them; yet did the scintillations which flashed from Ginotti's burning gaze dance on its bosom. Suddenly a flash of lightning hissed

through the lengthened vaults: a burst of frightful thunder seemed to convulse the universal fabric of nature; and, borne on the pinions of hell's sulphurous whirlwind, he himself, the frightful prince of terror, stood before them. "Yes," howled a voice superior to the bursting thunder-peal; "yes, thou shalt have eternal life, Ginotti." On a sudden Ginotti's frame mouldered to a gigantic skeleton, yet two pale and ghastly flames glared in his eyeless sockets. Blackened in terrible convulsions, Wolfstein expired; over him had the power of hell no influence. Yes, endless existence is thine, Ginotti—a dateless and hopeless eternity of horror.[1]

* * * * * * * * *

Ginotti is Nempere. Eloise is the sister of Wolfstein. Let then the memory of these victims to hell and malice live in the remembrance of those who can pity the wanderings of error; let remorse and repentance expiate the offences which arise from the delusion of the passions, and let endless life be sought from Him who alone can give an eternity of happiness.

[1] It is, perhaps, worth while to extract from *Stockdale's Budget* the elucidation of the catastrophe which the author vouchsafed to the publisher in a letter dated the 14th of November, 1810: "Ginotti, as you will perceive, did *not* die by Wolfstein's hand, but by the influence of that natural magic which, when the secret was imparted to the latter, destroyed him. Mountfort being a character of inferior import, I did not think it necessary to state the catastrophe of *him*, as it could at best be but uninteresting. Eloise and Fitzeustace are married and happy, I suppose, and Megalena dies by the same means as Wolfstein. I do not myself see any other explanation that is required."

THE END.

[OF ST. IRVYNE.]

The imprint of *St. Irvyne* is as follows:—

Printed by S. GOSNELL, Little Queen Street, London.

The Necessity of Atheism.

[Shelley's next extant publication after *St. Irvyne* appears to be the tract which led to his expulsion from the University of Oxford. There is much talk about this little work in the books of Hogg, Medwin, and others; but it has not been generally known that any copy of it was extant. Some years ago I ascertained that the late Mr. Hookham had a copy bound up with other pamphlets by Shelley; and from that copy, now in the possession of Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, the tract is here reproduced: I have only succeeded in hearing of one other extant copy. Medwin says (*Life of Shelley*, Vol. I, pages 139 *et seq.*) that *The Necessity of Atheism* was "never offered for sale": it was, he says, "a general issue, a compendious denial of every allegation in order to put the whole case in proof.... A formal mode of saying,—'You affirm so and so,—then prove it.'... But those who are anxious to see this syllabus, may find it *totidem verbis* in the notes to Queen Mab. This syllabus he sent to me among many others, and circulated it largely among the heads of colleges, and professors of the university, forwarding copies it is said to several of the bishops." There are two inaccuracies here, at least: it *was* offered for sale; and the corresponding note to *Queen Mab* (that on the words "There is no God") varies much from the tract in detail, as will be seen by the foot-notes. As to its being offered for sale, it is to be observed that Mr. MacCarthy (see *Shelley's Early Life*, page 108) found in the *Oxford University and City Herald* of the 9th of February, 1811, under the words *Speedily will be published, to be had of the Booksellers of London and Oxford*, the title of the tract, and what turns out to be the motto from Bacon given on its title-page (reproduced opposite). Moreover, I have good authority for stating that it was "on sale" in Oxford for twenty minutes. It seems not unlikely that other copies may come to light; but the smallness of the publication renders its existence precarious. It is a single foolscap sheet, folded in octavo; and consists of fly-title as given at the back of this note, title-page, a third leaf bearing the "Advertisement," the text occupying pages 7 to 13, and finally a blank leaf. There are no headlines; and the pages (8 to 13) are numbered centrally in Arabic figures.—H.B.F.]

THE

NECESSITY

OF

ATHEISM.

Quod clarâ et perspicuâ demonstratione careat pro vero habere mens omnino nequis humana.

Bacon de Augment. Scient.

WORTHING:

PRINTED BY E. & W. PHILLIPS.

Sold in London and Oxford.

Advertisement.

As a love of truth is the only motive which actuates the Author of this little tract, he earnestly entreats that those of his readers who may discover any deficiency in his reasoning, or may be in possession of proofs which his mind could never obtain, would offer them, together with their objections to the Public, as briefly, as methodically, as plainly as he has taken the liberty of doing. Thro' deficiency of proof,

AN ATHEIST.

THE

NECESSITY

OF

ATHEISM.

A CLOSE examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition, has ever been allowed to be the only sure way[1] of attaining truth, upon the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant; our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance, that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction, we proceed briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of Belief.

When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of the ideas of which it is

[1] In *Queen Mab* we read *is the only secure way.*

composed. A perception of their agreement is termed belief, many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate, these the mind attempts to remove in order that the perception may be distinct. The mind is active in the investigation, in order to perfect the state of perception[1] which is passive; the investigation being confused with the perception has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief, that belief is an act of volition, in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind; pursuing, continuing this mistake they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief of which in its nature it is incapable; it is equally so[2] of merit.

The strength of belief like that of every other passion is in proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind, consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind founded upon our own experience derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.[3]—

[1] In *Queen Mab*, after *perception*, stand the words *of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each.*

[2] In *Queen Mab* we read *equally incapable;* and the next paragraph stands thus:

"Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement."

[3] In *Queen Mab* we read between this paragraph and the next as follows:

"(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)"

It is curious that the whole of this interpolation is transferred to *A Refutation of Deism*, the word *barometer*, however, being replaced by *measure*.

Consequently no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason, reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions; we are naturally led to consider[1] what arguments we receive from each of them to[2] convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st. The evidence of the senses.—If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his existence; this revelation would necessarily command belief;—Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared, have the strongest possible conviction of his existence.[3]

Reason claims the 2nd. place, it is urged that man knows that whatever is, must either have had a beginning or existed from all eternity, he also knows that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause.—Where this is applied to the existence of the universe,[4] it is necessary to prove that it was created, until that is clearly demonstrated, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity.[5]—In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is less incomprehensible, it is easier to suppose that the Universe has existed from all eternity, than to

[1] In *Queen Mab* we read *it is to be considered.*

[2] In *Queen Mab* the words *which should* are substituted for *to.*

[3] In *Queen Mab* is added the trenchant sentence, *But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility;* and the next paragraph opens simply with *2nd. Reason.*

[4] In *Queen Mab* we read *When this reasoning is applied to the universe.*

[5] There is the following interpolation at this point in *Queen Mab:*

"We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other."

conceive a being[1] capable of creating it; if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burden?—The other argument which is founded upon a man's knowledge of his own existence stands thus.---A man knows not only he now is, but that there was a time when he did not exist,[2] consequently there must have been a cause.---But what does this prove? we can only infer from effects causes exactly adequate to those effects;---But there certainly is a generative power which is effected by particular instruments; we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments, nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration; we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible, but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, Almighty[3] Being, leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

The 3rd. and last degree of assent is claimed by Testimony---it is required that it should not be contrary to reason.---The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of his existence can only be admitted by us, if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived, than that the Deity should have appeared to them---our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles but that the Deity was irrational, for he commanded that he should be believed,

[1] In *Queen Mab* the words *beyond its limits* are introduced after *being*.

[2] These nine words are replaced in *Queen Mab* by four,—*once he was not;* and the next sentence, instead of *But what does this prove?* is—

"But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can," &c.

[3] We read *omnipotent* in *Queen Mab*, where the next paragraph begins thus: *3rd. Testimony. It is claimed that testimony*, &c.

he proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief---we can only command voluntary actions, belief is not an act of volition, the mind is even passive, from this it is evident that we have not sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient to prove the being of a God, we have before shewn[1] that it cannot be deduced from reason,---they who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses, they only can believe it.

From this it is evident that having no proofs from any of the three sources of conviction: the mind *cannot* believe the existence of a God, it is also evident that as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality can be attached to disbelief, they only are reprehensible who willingly neglect to remove the false medium thro' which their mind views the subject.

It is almost unnecessary to observe, that the general knowledge of the deficiency of such proof, cannot be prejudicial to society: Truth has always been found to promote the best interests of mankind.---Every reflecting mind must allow that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity. Q. E. D.

[1] In *Queen Mab* we read *It has been before shewn that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses, can believe it.* And the final paragraph stands thus:

"Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from either of the three sources of conviction, the mind *cannot* believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident, that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attachable to disbelief; and that they only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their minds view any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity."

The imprint of *The Necessity of Atheism* is as follows:—

Phillips, Printers, Worthing.

AN ADDRESS TO THE IRISH PEOPLE.

[Mr. MacCarthy, whose researches in the matter of the Irish Campaign are invaluable as to facts and details, fixes the date of publication of the *Address to the Irish People* as nearly as need be: he shews (*Shelley's Early Life*, pages 149 *et seq.*) that it came from the printer on the 24th of February, 1812, that copies of it were sent to Godwin and Hamilton Rowan on that and the following day respectively, and that an advertisement appeared in *The Dublin Evening Post* of the 25th and 29th of February, and 3rd of March. It is a "stabbed" 8vo. pamphlet, consisting of title-page and 22 pages of text, including the postscript, which occupies the last leaf. It is printed on three half-sheets, the title-page being the final leaf of the last half-sheet, and doubled back over the first two half-sheets. The pages have no head-lines, but are numbered centrally; and no printer's name appears. The type is exceedingly small and poor, and the paper very bad. Though just double the length of the second Irish pamphlet it has only two more leaves. The typography is moderately correct, though the punctuation, probably Shelley's, is eccentric. I have followed it rather than make and record innumerable small alterations, and have noted all those that it was absolutely necessary to make. There is a copy in the British Museum.—H. B. F.]

AN ADDRESS,

TO THE

IRISH PEOPLE,

By PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The lowest possible price is set on this publication, because it is the intention of the Author to awaken in the minds of the Irish poor, a knowledge of their real state, summarily pointing out the evils of that state, and suggesting rational means of remedy.—Catholic Emancipation, and a Repeal of the Union Act, (the latter, the most successful engine that England ever wielded over the misery of fallen Ireland,) being treated of in the following address, as grievances which unanimity and resolution may remove, and associations conducted with peaceable firmness, being earnestly recommended, as means for embodying that unanimity and firmness, which must finally be successful.

Dublin:

1812.

Price—5d.

AN ADDRESS,

TO THE

IRISH PEOPLE.

FELLOW MEN,

I am not an Irishman, yet I can feel for you. I hope there are none among you who will read this address with prejudice or levity, because it is made by an Englishman, indeed, I believe there are not. The Irish are a brave nation. They have a heart of liberty in their breasts, but they are much mistaken if they fancy that a stranger cannot have as warm a one. Those are my brothers and my countrymen, who are unfortunate. I should like to know what there is in a man being an Englishman, a Spaniard, or a Frenchman, that makes him worse or better than he really is. He was born in one town, you in another, but that is no reason why he should not feel for you, desire your benefit, or be willing to give you some advice, which may make you more capable of knowing your own interest, or acting so as to secure it.—There are many Englishmen who cry down

the Irish, and think it answers their ends to revile all that belongs to Ireland; but it is not because these men are Englishmen that they maintain such opinions, but because they wish to get money, and titles, and power. They would act in this manner to whatever country they might belong, until mankind is much altered for the better, which reform, I hope, will one day be effected.—I address you then, as my brothers and my fellow-men, for I should wish to see the Irishman who, if England was persecuted as Ireland is, who, if France was persecuted as Ireland is, who, if any set of men that helped to do a public service were prevented from enjoying its benefits as Irishmen are—I should like to see the man, I say, who would see these misfortunes, and not attempt to succour the sufferers when he could, just that I might tell him that he was no Irishman, but some bastard mongrel bred up in a court, or some coward fool who was a democrat to all above him, and an aristocrat to all below him. I think there are few true Irishmen who would not be ashamed of such a character, still fewer who possess it. I know that there are some, not among you my friends, but among your enemies, who seeing the title of this piece, will take it up with a sort of hope that it may recommend violent measures, and thereby disgrace the cause of freedom, that the warmth of an heart desirous that liberty should be possessed equally by all, will vent itself in abuse on the enemies of liberty, bad men who deserve the contempt of the good, and ought not to excite their indignation to the harm of their cause. But these men will be disappointed —I know the warm feelings of an Irishman sometimes carries[1] him beyond the point of prudence. I do not

[1] Sic.

desire to root out, but to moderate this honorable warmth. This will disappoint the pioneers of oppression and they will be sorry, that through this address nothing will occur which can be twisted into any other meaning but what is calculated to fill you with that moderation which they have not, and make you give them that toleration which they refuse to grant to you.—You profess the Roman Catholic religion which your fathers professed before you. Whether it is the best religion or not, I will not here inquire: all religions are good which make men good; and the way that a person ought to prove that his method of worshipping God is best, is for himself to be better than all other men. But we will consider what your religion was in old times and what it is now: you may say it is not a fair way for me to proceed as a Protestant, but I am not a Protestant, nor am I a Catholic, and therefore not being a follower of either of these religions, I am better able to judge between them. A Protestant is my brother, and a Catholic is my brother, I am happy when I can do either of them a service, and no pleasure is so great to me than that which I should feel if my advice could make men of any professions of faith, wiser, better and happier.

The Roman Catholics once persecuted the Protestants, the Protestants now persecute the Roman Catholics—should we think that one is as bad as the other? No, you are not answerable for the faults of your fathers any more than the Protestants are good for the goodness of their fathers. I must judge of people as I see them; the Irish Catholics are badly used. I will not endeavour to hide from them their wretchedness; they would think that I mocked at them if I should make the attempt.

The Irish Catholics now demand for themselves, and profess[1] for others unlimited toleration, and the sensible part among them, which I am willing to think constitutes a very large portion of their body, know that the gates of Heaven are open to people of every religion, provided they are good. But the Protestants, although they may think so in their hearts, which certainly if they think at all they must seem to act as if they thought that God was better pleased with them than with you, they trust the reins of earthly government only to the hands of their own sect; in spite of this, I never found one of them impudent[2] enough to say that a Roman Catholic, or a Quaker, or a Jew, or a Mahometan, if he was a virtuous man, and did all the good in his power, would go to Heaven a bit the slower for not subscribing to the thirty-nine articles—and if he should say so, how ridiculous in a foppish courtier not six feet high to direct the spirit of universal harmony, in what manner to conduct the affairs of the universe!

The Protestants say that there was a time when the Roman Catholics burnt and murdered people of different sentiments, and that their religious tenets are now as they were then. This is all very true. You certainly worship God in the same way that you did when those barbarities took place, but is that any reason that you should now be barbarous. There is as much reason to suppose it, as to suppose that because a man's great grandfather, who was a Jew, had been hung for sheep-stealing, that I, by believing the same religion as he did, must certainly commit the same crime. Let us then see

[1] In the original *profers*,—doubtless a misprint for *profess*, not for *proffer*.

[2] In the original, *impudently*.

what the Roman Catholic religion has been.—No one knows much of the early times of the Christian religion, until about three hundred years after its beginning, two great churches called the Roman and the Greek churches divided the opinions of men. They fought for a very long time, a great many words were wasted and a great deal of blood shed. This as you may suppose did no good. Each party however, thought they were doing God a service, and that he would reward them. If they had looked an inch before their noses they might have found that fighting and killing men, and cursing them and hating them, was the very worst way for getting into favour with a Being who is allowed by all to be best pleased with deeds of love and charity. At last, however, these two Religions entirely separated, and the Popes reigned like Kings and Bishops at Rome, in Italy. The inquisition was set up, and in the course of one year thirty thousand people were burnt in Italy and Spain, for entertaining different opinions from those of the Pope and the Priests. There was an instance of shocking barbarity which the Roman Catholic Clergy committed in France by order of the Pope. The bigotted Monks of that country, in cold blood, in one night massacred 80,000 Protestants; this was done under the authority of the Pope, and there was only one Roman Catholic Bishop who had virtue enough to refuse to help. The vices of Monks and Nuns in their Convents were in those times shameful, people thought that they might commit any sin, however monstrous, if they had money enough to prevail upon the Priests to absolve them; in truth, at that time the Priests shamefully imposed upon the people, they got all the power into their own hands, they persuaded them that a man could not be entrusted with the

care of his own soul, and by cunningly obtaining possession of their secrets, they became more powerful than Kings, Princes, Dukes, Lords, or Ministers: this power made them bad men; for although rational people are very good in their natural state, there are now, and ever have been very few whose good dispositions despotic power does not destroy. I have now given a fair description of what your religion was; and Irishmen my brothers! will you make your friend appear a liar, when he takes upon himself to say for you, that you are not now what the professors of the same faith were in times of yore. Do I speak false when I say that the inquisition is the object of your hatred? Am I a liar if I assert that an Irishman prizes liberty dearly, that he will preserve that right, and if he be wrong, does not dream that money given to a Priest, or the talking of another man erring like himself, can in the least influence the judgement of the eternal God?—I am not a liar if I affirm in your name, that you believe a Protestant equally with yourself to be worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven, if he be equally virtuous, that you will treat men as brethren wherever you may find them, and that difference of opinion in religious matters, shall not, does not in the least on your part, obstruct the most perfect harmony on every other subject.—Ah! no, Irishmen, I am not a liar. I seek your confidence, not that I may betray it, but that I may teach you to be happy, and wise, and good. If you will not repose any trust in me I shall lament, but I will do every thing in my power that is honorable, fair, and open, to gain it. Some teach you that others are heretics, that you alone are right; some teach that rectitude consists in religious opinions, without which no morality is good, some will tell you that you ought to

divulge your secrets to one particular set of men; beware my friends how you trust those who speak in this way. They will, I doubt not, attempt to rescue you from your present miserable state, but they will prepare a worse. It will be out of the frying-pan into the fire. Your present oppressors it is true, will then oppress you no longer, but you will feel the lash of a master a thousand times more blood-thirsty and cruel. Evil designing men will spring up who will prevent your thinking as you please, will burn you if you do not think as they do. There are always bad men who take advantage of hard times. The Monks and the Priests of old were very bad men; take care no such abuse your confidence again. You are not blind to your present situation, you are villainously treated, you are badly used. That this slavery shall cease, I will venture to prophesy. Your enemies dare not to persecute you longer, the spirit of Ireland is bent, but it is not broken, and that they very well know. But I wish your views to embrace a wider scene, I wish you to think for your children and your children's children; to take great care (for it all rests with you) that whilst one tyranny is destroyed another more fierce and terrible does not spring up. Take care then of smooth-faced impostors, who talk indeed of freedom, but who will cheat you into slavery. Can there be worse slavery than the depending for the safety of your soul on the will of another man? Is one man more favored than another by God. No, certainly, they are all favored according to the good they do, and not according to the rank and profession they hold. God values a poor man as much as a Priest, and has given him a soul as much to himself; the worship that a kind Being must love, is that of a simple affectionate heart,

that shews its piety in good works, and not in ceremonies, or confessions, or burials, or processions, or wonders. Take care then, that you are not led away. Doubt every thing that leads you not to charity, and think of the word "heretic" as a word which some selfish knave invented for the ruin and misery of the world, to answer his own paltry and narrow ambition. Do not inquire if a man be a heretic, if he be a Quaker, or a Jew, or a Heathen; but if he be a virtuous man, if he loves liberty and truth, if he wish the happiness and peace of human kind. If a man be ever so much a believer and love not these things, he is a heartless hypocrite, a rascal, and a knave. Despise and hate him, as ye despise a tyrant and a villain. Oh! Ireland, thou emerald of the ocean, whose sons are generous and brave, whose daughters are honorable, and frank, and fair; thou art the isle on whose green shores I have desired to see the standard of liberty erected, a flag of fire, a beacon at which the world shall light the torch of Freedom!

We will now examine the Protestant Religion. Its origin is called the Reformation. It was undertaken by some bigotted men, who showed how little they understood the spirit of Reform, by burning each other. You will observe that these men burnt each other, indeed they universally betrayed a taste for destroying, and vied with the chiefs of the Roman Catholic Religion, in not only hating their enemies, but those men, who least of all were their enemies, or any body's enemies. Now, do the Protestants, or do they not hold the same tenets as they did when Calvin burnt Servetus, they swear that they do. We can have no better proof. Then with what face can the Protestants object to Catholic Emancipation, on the

plea that Catholics once were barbarous; when their own establishment is liable to the very same objections, on the very same grounds? I think this is a specimen of barefaced intoleration, which I had hoped would not have disgraced this age; this age, which is called the age of reason, of thought diffused, of virtue acknowledged, and its principles fixed.—Oh! that it may be so.—I have mentioned the Catholic and Protestant Religions more to shew that any objection to the toleration of the one forcibly applies to the non-permission of the other, or rather to shew that there is no reason why both might not be tolerated, why every Religion, every form of thinking might not be tolerated.—But why do I speak of *toleration?* This word seems to mean that there is some merit in the person who tolerates, he has this merit if it be one, of refraining to do an evil act, but he will share the merit with every other peaceable person who pursues his own business, and does not hinder another of his rights. It is not a merit to tolerate, but it is a crime to be intolerant: it is not a merit in[1] me that I sat quietly at home without murdering any one, but it is a crime if I do so. Besides no act of a National representation can make any thing wrong, which was not wrong before; it cannot change virtue and truth, and for a very plain reason; because they are unchangeable. An act passed in the British Parliament to take away the rights of Catholics to act in that assembly, does not really take them away. It prevents them from doing it by force. This is in such cases, the last and only efficacious way. But force is not the test of truth; they will never have recourse to violence who acknowledge no other rule of behaviour but virtue and justice.

[1] In the original, *on*.

The folly of persecuting men for their religion will appear if we examine it. Why do we persecute them? to make them believe as we do. Can any thing be more barbarous or foolish.—For although we may make them say they believe as we do, they will not in their hearts do any such thing, indeed they cannot, this devilish method can only make them false hypocrites. For what is belief? We cannot believe just what we like, but only what we think to be true; for you cannot alter a man's opinion by beating or burning, but by persuading him that what you think is right, and this can only be done by fair words and reason. It is ridiculous to call a man a heretic, because he thinks differently from you, he might as well call you one. In the same sense, the word orthodox is used, it signifies "to think rightly" and what can be more vain and presumptuous in any man or any set of men, to put themselves so out of the ordinary course of things as to say—"What we think is right, no other people throughout the world have opinions any thing like equal to ours." Any thing short of unlimited toleration, and complete charity with all men, on which you will recollect that Jesus Christ principally insisted, is wrong, and for this reason—what makes a man to be a good man? not his religion, or else there could be no good men in any religion but one, when yet we[1] find that all ages, countries, and opinions have produced them. Virtue and wisdom always so far as they went produced liberty or happiness long before any of the religions now in the world were[2] ever heard of. The only use of a religion that ever I could see, is to make men wiser or better, so far as it does this, it is a good one. Now if people are good, and

[1] In the original, *when we yet we* &c.

[2] In the original, *have*, doubtless a misprint for *were*.

yet have sentiments differing from you, then all the purposes are answered, which any reasonable man could want, and whether he thinks like you or not, is of too little consequence to employ means which must be disgusting and hateful to candid minds, nay they cannot approve of such means. For as I have before said you cannot believe or disbelieve what you like—perhaps some of you may doubt this, but just try—I will take a common and familiar instance. Suppose you have a friend of whom you wish to think well, he commits a crime, which proves to you that he is a bad man. It is very painful to you to think ill of him, and you would still think well of him if you could. But mark the word, you *cannot* think well of him, not even to secure your own peace of mind can you do so. You try, but your attempts are vain. This shews how little power a man has over his belief, or rather, that he cannot believe what he does not think true. And what shall we think now? What fools and tyrants must not those men be, who set up a particular religion, say that this religion alone is right, and that every one who disbelieves it, ought to be deprived of certain rights which are really his, and which would be allowed him if he believed. Certainly, if you cannot help disbelief, it is not any fault in you.—To take away a man's rights and privileges, to call him a heretic or to think worse of him, when at the same time you cannot help owning that he has committed no fault, is the grossest tyranny and intoleration. From what has been said I think we may be justified in concluding, that people of all religions ought to have an equal share in the state, that the words heretic and orthodox were invented by a vain villain, and have done a great deal of harm in the world, and that no person is answerable for

his belief whose actions are virtuous and moral, that the religion is best whose members are the best men, and that no person can help either his belief or disbelief.—Be in charity with all men. It does not therefore, signify what your Religion *was*, or what the Protestant Religion *was*, we must consider them as we find them. What are they *now*? Yours is not intolerant, indeed my friends I have ventured to pledge myself for you that it is not. You merely desire to go to Heaven, in your own way, nor will you interrupt fellow travellers, although the road which you take, may not be that which they take. Believe me, that goodness of heart and purity of life are things of more value in the eye of the Spirit of Goodness, than idle earthly ceremonies, and things which have any thing but charity for their object. And is it for the first or the last of these things that you or the Protestants contend. It is for the last. Prejudiced people indeed, are they who grudge to the happiness and comfort of your souls, things which can do harm to no one. They are not compelled to share in these rites. Irishmen; knowledge is more extended than in the early period of your religion, people have learned to think, and the more thought there is in the world, the more happiness and liberty will there be:—men begin now to think less of idle ceremonies, and more of realities. From a long night have they risen, and they can perceive its darkness. I know no men of thought and learning who do not consider the Catholic idea of purgatory, much nearer the truth than the Protestant one of eternal damnation. Can you think that the Mahometans and the Indians, who have done good deeds in this life, will not be rewarded in the next. The Protestants believe that they will be eternally damned, at least they swear

that they do.—I think they appear in a better light as perjurers, than believers in a falsehood so hateful and uncharitable as this.—I propose unlimited toleration. or rather the destruction, both of toleration and intoleration. The act permits certain people to worship God after such a manner, which, in fact, if not done, would as far as in it lay prevent God from hearing their address. Can we conceive any thing more presumptuous, and at the same time more ridiculous, than a set of men granting a licence to God to receive the prayers of certain of his creatures. Oh Irishmen! I am interested in your cause; and it is not because you are Irishmen or Roman Catholics, that I feel with you and feel for you; but because you are men and sufferers. Were Ireland at this moment, peopled with Brahmins, this very same address would have been suggested by the same state of mind. You have suffered not merely for your religion, but some other causes which I am equally desirous of remedying. The Union of England with Ireland has withdrawn the Protestant aristocracy, and gentry from their native country, and with these their friends and connections. Their resources are taken from this country, although they are dissipated in another; the very poor people are most infamously oppressed by the weight of burden which the superior ranks lay upon their shoulders. I am no less desirous of the reform of these evils (with many others) than for the Catholic Emancipation.

Perhaps you all agree with me on both these subjects, we now come to the method of doing these things. I agree with the Quakers so far as they disclaim violence, and trust their cause wholly and solely to its own truth. —If you are convinced of the truth of your cause, trust

wholly to its truth; if you are not convinced, give it up. In no case employ violence, the way to liberty and happiness is never to transgress the rules of virtue and justice. Liberty and happiness are founded upon virtue and justice, if you destroy the one, you destroy the other. However ill others may act, this will be no excuse for you if you follow their example; it ought rather to warn you from pursuing so bad a method. Depend upon it, Irishmen, your cause shall not be neglected. I will fondly hope, that the schemes for your happiness and liberty, as well as those for the happiness and liberty of the world, will not be wholly fruitless. One secure method of defeating them is violence on the side of the injured party. If you can descend to use the same weapons as your enemy, you put yourself on a level with him on this score, you must be convinced that he is on these grounds your superior. But appeal to the sacred principles of virtue and justice, then how is he awed into nothing? how does truth show him in his real colours, and place the cause of toleration and reform in the clearest light. I extend my view not only to you as Irishmen, but to all of every persuasion, of every country. Be calm, mild, deliberate, patient; recollect that you can in no measure more effectually forward the cause of reform than by employing your leisure time in reasoning, or the cultivation of your minds. Think and talk, and discuss. The only subjects you ought to propose, are those of happiness and liberty. Be free and be happy, but first be wise and good. For you are not all wise or good.[1] You are a great and a brave nation, but you cannot yet be all wise or good. You may be at some time, and then Ireland

[1] In the original there is a comma here instead of a period, notwithstanding the capital letter for the next word.

will be an earthly Paradise. You know what is meant by a mob, it is an assembly of people who without foresight or thought, collect themselves to disapprove of by force any measure which they dislike. An assembly like this can never do any thing but harm, tumultuous proceedings must retard the period when thought and coolness will produce freedom and happiness, and that to the very people who make the mob, but if a number of human beings, after thinking of their own interests, meet together for any conversation on them, and employ resistance of the mind, not resistance of the body, these people are going the right way to work. But let no fiery passions carry them beyond this point, let them consider that in some sense, the whole welfare of their countrymen depends on their prudence, and that it becomes them to guard the welfare of others as their own. Associations for purposes of violence, are entitled to the strongest disapprobation of the real reformist. Always suspect that some knavish rascal is at the bottom of things of this kind, waiting to profit by the confusion. All secret associations are also bad. Are you men of deep designs, whose deeds love darkness better than light; dare you not say what you think before any man, can you not meet in the open face of day in conscious innocence? Oh, Irishmen ye can. Hidden arms, secret meetings and designs, violently to separate England from Ireland, are all very bad. I do not mean to say the very end of them is bad, the object you have in view may be just enough, whilst the way you go about it is wrong, may be calculated to produce an opposite effect. Never do evil that good may come, always think of others as well as yourself, and cautiously look how your conduct may do good or evil, when you yourself shall be mouldering in

the grave. Be fair, open, and you will be terrible to your enemies. A friend cannot defend you, much as he may feel for your sufferings, if you have recourse to methods of which virtue and justice disapprove. No cause is in itself so dear to liberty as yours. Much depends on you, far may your efforts spread, either hope or despair; do not then cover in darkness wrongs at which the face of day, and the tyrants who bask in its warmth ought to blush.[1] Wherever has violence succeeded. The French Revolution, although undertaken with the best intentions, ended ill for the people; because violence was employed, the cause which they vindicated was that of truth, but they gave it the appearance of a lie, by using methods which will suit the purposes of liars as well as their own. Speak boldly and daringly what you think; an Irishman was never accused of cowardice, do not let it be thought possible that he is a coward. Let him say what he thinks, a lie is the basest and meanest employment of men, leave lies and secrets to courtiers and lordlings; be open, sincere, and single hearted. Let it be seen that the Irish votaries of Freedom dare to speak what they think, let them resist oppression, not by force of arms, but by power of mind, and reliance on truth and justice. Will any be arraigned for libel—will imprisonment or death be the consequences of this mode of proceeding: probably not—but if it were so? Is danger frightful to an Irishman who speaks for his own liberty, and the liberty of his wife and children:—No, he will steadily persevere, and sooner shall pensioners cease to vote with their benefactors, than an Irishman swerve from the path of duty. But steadily persevere in the system above laid down, its

[1] Period dropped in the original.

benefits will speedily be manifested. Persecution may destroy some, but cannot destroy all, or nearly all; let it do its will, ye have appealed to truth and justice—show the goodness of your religion by persisting in a reliance on these things, which must be the rules even of the Almighty's conduct. But before this can be done with any effect, habits of SOBRIETY, REGULARITY, and THOUGHT, must be entered into, and firmly resolved upon.

My warm-hearted friends, who meet together to talk of the distresses of your countrymen, until social chat induces you to drink rather freely; as ye have felt passionately, so reason coolly. Nothing hasty can be lasting; lay up the money with which you usually purchase drunkenness and ill-health, to relieve the pains of your fellow-sufferers. Let your children lisp of Freedom in the cradle—let your death-bed be the school for fresh exertions—let every street of the city, and field of the country, be connected with thoughts, which liberty has made holy. Be warm in your cause, yet rational, and charitable, and tolerant—never let the oppressor grind you into justifying his conduct by imitating his meanness.

Many circumstances, I will own, may excuse what is called rebellion, but no circumstances can ever make it good for your cause, and however honourable to your feelings, it will reflect no credit on your judgments. It will bind you more closely to the block of the oppressor, and your children's children, whilst they talk of your exploits, will feel that you have done them injury, instead of benefit.

A crisis is now arriving, which shall decide your fate. The king of Great Britain has arrived at the evening of his days.[1] He has objected to your emancipation; he has been inimical to you; but he will in a certain time be no more. The present Prince of Wales will then be king. It is said that he has promised to restore you to freedom: your real and natural right will, in that case, be no longer kept from you. I hope he has pledged himself to this act of justice, because there will then exist some obligation to bind him to do right. Kings are but too apt to think little as they should do: they think every thing in the world is made for them; when the truth is, that it is only the vices of men that make such people necessary, and they have no other right of being kings, but in virtue of the good they do. The benefit of the governed is the origin and meaning of government. The Prince of Wales has had every opportunity of knowing how he ought to act about Ireland and liberty. That great and good man, Charles Fox, who was your friend, and the friend of freedom, was the friend of the Prince of Wales. He never flattered or disguised his sentiments, but spoke them *openly* on every occasion, and the Prince was the better for his instructive conversation. He saw the truth, and he believed it. Now I know not what to say; his staff is gone, and he leans upon a broken reed; his present advisers are not like Charles Fox, they do not plan for liberty and safety, not for the happiness but for the glory of their country; and what, Irishmen, is the glory of a country divided from their happiness? it is a false light hung out by the

[1] In the original there is here, again, a comma, although the next word is spelt with a capital lette..

enemies of freedom to lure the unthinking into their net. Men like these surround the Prince, and whether or no he has really promised to emancipate you, whether or no he will consider the promise of a Prince of Wales binding to a King of England, is yet a matter of doubt. We cannot at least be quite certain of it: on this you cannot certainly rely. But there are men who, wherever they find a tendency to freedom, go there to increase, support, and regulate that tendency. These men who join to a rational disdain of danger, a practice of speaking the truth, and defending the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor; these men see what is right and will pursue it. On such as these you may safely rely: they love you as they love their brothers; they feel for the unfortunate, and never ask whether a man is an Englishman or an Irishman, a catholic, a heretic, a christian, or a heathen, before their hearts and their purses are opened to feel with their misfortunes and relieve their necessities: such are the men who will stand by you for ever. Depend then, not upon the promises of Princes, but upon those of virtuous and disinterested men: depend not upon force of arms or violence, but upon the force of the truth of the rights which you have to share equally with others, the benefits and the evils of Government.

The crisis to which I allude as the period of your emancipation, is not the death of the present king, or any circumstance that has to do with kings, but something that is much more likely to do you good: it is the increase of virtue and wisdom which will lead people to find out that force and oppression are

wrong and false: and this opinion, when it once gains ground, will prevent government from severity. It will restore those rights which government has taken away. Have nothing to do with force or violence, and things will safely and surely make their way to the right point. The Ministers have now in Parliament a very great majority, and the Ministers are against you. They maintain the falsehood that, were you in power you would prosecute[1] and burn, on the plea that you once did so. They maintain many other things of the same nature.—They command the majority of the House of Commons, or rather the part of that assembly, who receive pensions from Government, or whose relatives receive them. These men of course, are against you, because their employers are. But the sense of the country is not against you, the people of England are not against you—they feel warmly for you—in some respects they feel with you. The sense of the English and of their Governors is opposite—there must be an end of this, the goodness of a Government consists in the happiness of the Governed, if the Governed are wretched and dissatisfied, the Government has failed in its end. It wants altering and mending. It will be mended, and a reform of English Government will produce good to the Irish—good to all human kind, excepting those whose happiness consists in others'[2] sorrows, and it will be a fit punishment for these to be deprived of their devilish joy. This I consider as an event which is approaching, and which will make the beginning of our hopes for that period which may spread wisdom and virtue so wide, as

[1] Probably a misprint for *persecute*.

[2] In the pamphlet *others*, without the apostrophe.

to leave no hole in which folly or villainy may hide themselves. I wish you, O Irishmen, to be as careful and thoughtful of your interests as are your real friends. Do not drink, do not play, do not spend any idle time, do not take every thing that other people say for granted—there are numbers who will tell you lies to make their own fortunes, you cannot more certainly do good to your own cause, than by defeating the intentions of these men. Think, read and talk; let your own condition and that of your wives and children, fill your minds; disclaim all manner of alliance with violence, meet together if ye will, but do not meet in a mob. If you think and read and talk with a real wish of benefiting the cause of truth and liberty, it will soon be seen how true a service you are rendering, and how sincere you are in your professions; but mobs and violence must be discarded. The certain degree of civil and religious liberty which the usage of the English Constitution allows, is such as the worst of men are entitled to, although you have it not; but that liberty which we may one day hope for, wisdom and virtue can alone give you a right to enjoy. This wisdom and this virtue I recommend on every account that you should *instantly begin* to practice. Lose not a day, not an hour, not a moment.—Temperance, sobriety, charity and independence will give you virtue; and reading, talking, thinking and searching, will give you wisdom; when you have those things you may defy the tyrant. It is not going often to chapel, crossing yourselves, or confessing, that will make you virtuous; many a rascal has attended regularly at Mass, and many a good man has never gone at all. It is not paying Priests, or believing in what they say that makes a good man, but it is doing good actions, or benefiting other people; this is the true

way to be good, and the prayers, and confessions, and masses of him who does not these things, are good for nothing at all. Do your work regularly and quickly, when you have done, think, read and talk; do not spend your money in idleness and drinking, which so far from doing good to your cause, will do it harm. If you have any thing to spare from your wife and children, let it do some good to other people, and put them in a way of getting wisdom and virtue, as the pleasure that will come from these good acts, will be much better than the headache that comes from a drinking bout. And never quarrel between each other, be all of one mind as nearly as you can; do these things, and I will promise you liberty and happiness. But if, on the contrary of these things, you neglect to improve yourselves, continue to use the word heretic, and demand from others the toleration which you are unwilling to give; your friends and the friends of liberty will have reason to lament the death-blow of their hopes. I expect better things from you; it is for yourselves that I fear and hope. Many Englishmen are prejudiced against you, they sit by their own fire-sides and certain rumours artfully spread[1] are ever on the wing against you. But these people who think ill of you and of your nation, are often the very men who, if they had better information, would feel for you most keenly; wherefore are these reports spread, how do[2] they begin? they originate from the warmth of the Irish character, which the friends of the Irish nation have hitherto encouraged rather than repressed; this leads them in those moments when their wrongs appear so clearly, to commit acts which justly excite displeasure. They begin therefore, from

[1] There is a note of interrogation here in the original.

[2] In the original *so* for *do*.

yourselves, although falsehood and tyranny artfully magnify and multiply the causes of offence.—Give no offence.

I will for the present dismiss the subject of the Catholic Emancipation; a little reflection will convince you that my remarks are just. Be true to yourselves, and your enemies shall not triumph. I fear nothing, if charity and sobriety mark your proceedings. Every thing is to be dreaded, you yourselves will be unworthy of even a restoration to your rights, if you disgrace the cause, which I hope is that of truth and liberty, by violence, if you refuse to others the toleration which you claim for yourselves.—But this you will not do. I rely upon it Irishmen, that the warmth of your characters will be shewn as much in union with Englishmen and what are called heretics, who feel for you, and love you as in avenging your wrongs, or forwarding their annihilation.—It is the heart that glows and not the cheek. The firmness, sobriety, and consistence of your outward behaviour will not at all shew any hardness of heart, but will prove that you are determined in your cause, and are going the right way to work.—I will repeat that virtue and wisdom are necessary to true happiness and liberty.—The Catholic Emancipation I consider, is certain. I do not see that any thing but violence and intolerance among yourselves can leave an excuse to your enemies for continuing your slavery. The other wrongs under which you labor, will probably also soon be done away. You will be rendered equal to the people of England in their rights and privileges, and will be in all respects, so far as concerns the state, as happy. And now Irishmen another, and

a more wide prospect opens to my view. I cannot avoid, little as it may appear to have any thing to do with your present situation, to talk to you on the subject. It intimately concerns the well-being of your children, and your children's children, and will perhaps more than any thing prove to you the advantage and necessity of being thoughtful, sober, and regular; of avoiding foolish and idle talk, and thinking of yourselves, as of men who are able to be much wiser and happier than you now are; for habits like these, will not only conduce to the successful putting aside your present and immediate grievances, but will contain a seed, which in future times will spring up into the tree of liberty, and bear the fruit of happiness.

There is no doubt but the world is going wrong, or rather that it is very capable of being much improved. What I mean by this improvement is, the inducement of a more equal and general diffusion of happiness and liberty.—Many people are very rich and many are very poor. Which do you think are happiest?—I can tell you that neither are happy, so far as their station is concerned. Nature never intended that there should be such a thing as a poor man or a rich one. Being put in an unnatural situation, they can neither of them be happy, so far as their situation is concerned. The poor man is born to obey the rich man, though they both come into the world equally helpless, and equally naked. But the poor man does the rich no service by obeying him—the rich man does the poor no good by commanding him. It would be much better if they could be prevailed upon to live equally like brothers—they would ultimately both be happier. But

this can be done neither to-day nor to-morrow, much as such a change is to be desired, it is quite impossible. Violence and folly in this, as in the other case, would only put off the period of its event. Mildness, sobriety, and reason, are the effectual methods of forwarding the ends of liberty and happiness.

Although we may see many things put in train, during our life-time, we cannot hope to see the work of virtue and reason finished now; we can only lay the foundation for our posterity. Government is an evil, it is only the thoughtlessness and vices of men that make it a necessary evil. When all men are good and wise, Government will of itself decay, so long as men continue foolish and vicious, so long will Government, even such a Government as that of England, continue necessary in order to prevent the crimes of bad men. Society is produced by the wants, Government by the wickedness, and a state of just and happy equality by the improvement and reason of man. It is in vain to hope for any liberty and happiness, without reason and virtue—for where there is no virtue there will be crime, and where there is crime there must be Government. Before the restraints of Government are lessened, it is fit that we should lessen the necessity for them. Before Government is done away with, we must reform ourselves. It is this work which I would earnestly recommend to you, O Irishmen, REFORM YOURSELVES—and I do not recommend it to you particularly because I think that you most need it, but because I think that your hearts are warm and your feelings high, and you will perceive the necessity of doing it more than those of a colder and more distant nature.

I look with an eye of hope and pleasure on the present state of things; gloomy and incapable of improvement as they may appear to others. It delights me to see that men begin to think and to act for the good of others. Extensively as folly and selfishness has predominated in this age, it gives me hope and pleasure, at least, to see that many know what is right. Ignorance and vice commonly go together: he that would do good must be wise—a man cannot be truly wise who is not truly virtuous. Prudence and wisdom are very different things. The prudent man is he, who carefully consults for his own good: the wise man is he, who carefully consults for the good of others.

I look upon Catholic Emancipation, and the restoration of the liberties and happiness of Ireland, so far as they are compatible with the English Constitution, as great and important events. I hope to see them soon. But if all ended here, it would give me little pleasure—I should still see thousands miserable and wicked, things would still be wrong. I regard then, the accomplishment of these things as the road to a greater reform—that reform after which virtue and wisdom shall have conquered pain and vice. When no government will be wanted, but that of your neighbour's opinion.—I look to these things with hope and pleasure, because I consider that they will certainly happen, and because men will not then be wicked and miserable. But I do not consider that they will or can immediately happen; their arrival will be gradual, and it all depends upon yourselves how soon or how late these great changes will happen. If all of you, to-morrow were virtuous and wise, Government which to-day is a safe-guard, would then become a

tyranny. But I cannot expect a rapid change. Many are obstinate and determined in their vice, whose selfishness makes them think only of their own good, when in fact, the best way even to bring that about, is to make others happy. I do not wish to see things changed now, because it cannot be done without violence, and we may assure ourselves that none of us are fit for any change however good, if we condescend to employ force in a cause which we think right. Force makes the side that employs it directly wrong, and as much as we may pity we cannot approve the headstrong and intolerant zeal of its adherents.

Can you conceive, O Irishmen! a happy state of society—conceive men of every way of thinking living together like brothers. The descendant of the greatest Prince would there, be entitled to no more respect than the son of a peasant. There would be no pomp and no parade, but that which the rich now keep to themselves, would then be distributed among the people. None would be in magnificence, but the superfluities then taken from the rich would be sufficient when spread abroad, to make every one comfortable.—No lover would then be false to his mistress, no mistress would desert her lover. No friend would play false, no rents, no debts, no taxes, no frauds of any kind would disturb the general happiness: good as they would be, wise as they would be, they would be daily getting better and wiser. No beggars would exist, nor any of those wretched women, who are now reduced to a state of the most horrible misery and vice, by men whose wealth makes them villainous and hardened. No thieves or murderers, because poverty would never drive men to take away comforts from another, when he

had enough for himself. Vice and misery, pomp and poverty, power and obedience, would then be banished altogether.—It is for such a state as this, Irishmen, that I exhort you to prepare.—"A camel shall as soon pass through the eye of a needle, as a rich man enter the Kingdom of Heaven.". This is not to be understood literally, Jesus Christ appears to me only to have meant that riches, have generally the effect of hardening and vitiating the heart, so has poverty. I think those people then are very silly, and cannot see one inch beyond their noses, who say that human nature is depraved; when at the same time wealth and poverty, those two great sources of crime, fall to the lot of a great majority of people; and when they see that people in moderate circumstances are always most wise and good.—People say that poverty is no evil—they have never felt it, or they would not think so. That wealth is necessary to encourage the arts —but are not the arts very inferior things to virtue and happiness—the man would be very dead to all generous feelings who would rather see pretty pictures and statues, than a million free and happy men.

It will be said, that my design is to make you dissatisfied with your present condition, and that I wish to raise a Rebellion. But how stupid and sottish must those men be, who think that violence and uneasiness of mind have any thing to do with forwarding the views of peace, harmony and happiness. They should know that nothing was so well-fitted to produce slavery, tyranny, and vice, as the violence which is attributed to the friends of liberty, and which the real friends of liberty are the only persons who disdain.—As to your being dissatisfied with your present condition, any thing

that I may say is certainly not likely to increase that dissatisfaction. I have advanced nothing concerning your situation, but its real case, but what may be proved to be true. I defy any one to point out a falsehood that I have uttered in the course of this address. It is impossible but the blindest among you must see that every thing is not right. This sight has often pressed some of the poorest among you to take something from the rich man's store by violence, to relieve his own necessities. I cannot justify, but I can pity him. I cannot pity the fruits of the rich man's intemperance, I suppose some are to be found who will justify him. This sight has often brought home to a day-labourer the truth which I wish to impress upon you, that all is not right. But I do not merely wish, to convince you that our present state is bad, but that its alteration for the better, depends on your own exertions and resolutions.

But he has never found out the method of mending it, who does not first mend his own conduct, and then prevail upon others to refrain from any vicious habits which they may have contracted—much less does the poor man suppose that wisdom as well as virtue is necessary, and that the employing his little time in reading and thinking, is really doing all that he has in his power to do towards the state, when pain and vice shall perish altogether.

I wish to impress upon your minds, that without virtue or wisdom, there can be no liberty or happiness; and that temperance, sobriety, charity, and independence of soul, will give you virtue—as thinking, enquiring, reading, and talking, will give you wisdom. Without

the first, the last is of little use, and without the last, the first is a dreadful curse to yourselves and others.

I have told you what I think upon this subject, because I wish to produce in your minds an awe and caution necessary, before the happy state of which I have spoken can be introduced. This cautious awe, is very different from the prudential fear, which leads you to consider yourself as the first object, as on the contrary, it is full of, that warm and ardent love for others that burns in your hearts, O Irishmen! and from which I have fondly hoped to light a flame that may illumine and invigorate the world!

I have said that the rich command, and the poor obey, and that money is only a kind of sign, which shews, that according to government the rich man has a right to command the poor man, or rather that the poor man being urged by having no money to get bread, is forced to work for the rich man, which amounts to the same thing. I have said that I think all this very wrong, and that I wish the whole business was altered. I have also said that we can expect little amendment in our own time, and that we must be contented to lay the foundation of liberty and happiness, by virtue and wisdom.—This then, shall be my work: let this be yours, Irishmen. Never shall that glory fail, which I am anxious that you should deserve. The glory of teaching to a world the first lessons of virtue and wisdom.

Let poor men still continue to work. I do not wish to hide from them a knowledge of their relative condition in society, I esteem it next impossible to do so. Let the

work of the labourer, of the artificer—let the work of every one, however employed, still be exerted in its accustomed way. The public communication of this truth, ought in no manner, to impede the established usages of society; however, it is fitted in the end to do them away. For this reason it ought not to impede them, because if it did, a violent and unaccustomed, and sudden sensation would take place in all ranks of men, which would bring on violence, and destroy the possibility of the event of that, which in its own nature must be gradual, however rapid, and rational, however warm. It is founded on the reform of private men, and without individual amendment it is vain and foolish to expect the amendment of a state or government. I would advise them therefore, whose feelings this address may have succeeded in affecting, (and surely those feelings which charitable and temperate remarks excite, can never be violent and intolerant,) if they be, as I hope those whom poverty has compelled to class themselves in the lower orders of society, that they will as usual attend to their business and the discharge of those public or private duties, which custom has ordained. Nothing can be more rash and thoughtless, than to shew in ourselves singular instances of any particular doctrine, before the general mass of the people are so convinced by the reasons of the doctrine, that it will be no longer singular. That reasons as well as feelings, may help the establishment of happiness and liberty, on the basis of wisdom and virtue, in[1] our aim and intention.—Let us not be led into any means which are unworthy of this end, nor, as so much depends upon yourselves, let us cease carefully to watch over our conduct, that when we talk of reform it

[1] Probably a misprint for *is*.

be not objected to us; that reform ought to begin at home. In the interval, that public or private duties and necessary labors allow, husband your time so, that you may do to others and yourselves the most real good. To improve your own minds is to join these two views: conversation and reading are the principal and chief methods of awakening the mind to knowledge and goodness. Reading or thought, will principally bestow the former of these—the benevolent exercise of the powers of the mind in communicating useful knowledge, will bestow an habit, of the latter, both united, will contribute so far as lays in your individual power to that great reform, which will be perfect and finished, the moment every one is virtuous and wise. Every folly refuted, every bad habit conquered, every good one confirmed, as[1] so much gained in this great and excellent cause.

To begin to reform the Government, is immediately necessary, however good or bad individuals may be; it is the more necessary if they are eminently the latter, in some degree to palliate or do away the cause; as political institution has even[2] the greatest influence on the human character, and is that alone which differences the Turk from the Irishman.

I write now not only with a view for Catholic Emancipation, but for universal emancipation; and this emancipation complete and unconditional, that shall comprehend every individual of whatever nation or principles,[3] that shall fold in its embrace all that think and all that feel,

[1] Probably a misprint for *is*, or, it may be, for *are*.

[2] Perhaps we should read *ever* in the place of *even*.

[3] There is no comma here in the pamphlet.

the Catholic cause is subordinate, and its success preparatory to this great cause, which adheres to no sect but society, to no cause but that of universal happiness, to no party but the people. I desire Catholic Emancipation, but I desire not to stop here, and I hope there are few who having perused the preceding arguments who[1] will not concur with me in desiring a complete, a lasting and a happy amendment. That all steps however good and salutary which may be taken, all reforms consistent with the English constitution that may be effectuated, can only be subordinate and preparatory to the great and lasting one which shall bring about the peace, the harmony, and the happiness of Ireland, England, Europe,[2] the World. I offer merely an outline of that picture which your own hopes may gift with the colors of reality.

Government will not allow a peaceable and reasonable discussion of its principles by any association of men, who assemble for that express purpose. But have not human beings a right to assemble to talk upon what subject they please; can anything be more evident than that as government is only of use as it conduces to the happiness of the governed; those who are governed have a right to talk on the efficacy of the safe guard employed for their benefit. Can any topic be more interesting or useful, than on[3] discussing how far the means of government, is or could be made in a higher degree effectual to producing the end. Although I deprecate violence, and the cause which depends for its influence on[4] force, yet I can by no means think that assembling together merely to talk of how things go on, I can by no means think that

[1] Sic.
[2] This comma is wanting in the pamphlet.
[3] Sic.
[4] In the original *a* for *on*.

societies formed for talking on any subject however government may dislike them, come in any way under the head of force or violence. I think that associations conducted in the spirit of sobriety, regularity, and thought, are one of the best and most efficient of those means which I would recommend for the production of happiness, liberty, and virtue.

Are you slaves, or are you men ? if slaves, then crouch to the rod, and lick the feet of your oppressors, glory in your shame, it will become you if brutes to act according to your nature. But you are men, a real man is free, so far as circumstances will permit him. Then firmly, yet quietly resist. When one cheek is struck, turn[1] the other to the insulting coward. You will be truly brave ; you will resist and conquer. The discussion of any subject, is a right that you have brought into the world with your heart and tongue. Resign your heart's-blood, before you part with this inestimable privilege of man. For it is fit that the governed should enquire into the proceedings of Government, which is of no use the moment it is conducted on any other principle but that of safety. You have much to think of.—Is war necessary to your happiness and safety. The interests of the poor gain nothing from the wealth or extension of a nation's boundaries, they gain nothing from glory, a word that has often served as a cloak to the ambition or avarice of Statesmen. The barren victories of

[1] In the original edition we read here *turn in the other*. The word in has been transferred to its proper place a few lines above,—*glory in your shame*,—whence it is missing in the original. Probably it was inserted as a correction in the margin of a proof, and was put in by the printer in the wrong place.

Spain, gained in behalf of a bigotted and tyrannical Government, are nothing to them. The conquests in India, by which England has gained glory indeed, but a glory which is not more honourable than that of Buonaparte, are nothing to them. The poor purchase this glory and this wealth, at the expence of their blood, and labor, and happiness, and virtue. They die in battle for this infernal cause. Their labor supplies money and food for carrying it into effect, their happiness is destroyed by the oppression they undergo, their virtue is rooted out by the depravity and vice that prevails throughout the army, and which under the present system, is perfectly unavoidable. Who does not know that the quartering of a regiment on any town, will soon destroy the innocence and happiness of its inhabitants. The advocates for the happiness and liberty of the great mass of the people, who pay for war with their lives and labor, ought never to cease writing and speaking until nations see as they must feel, the folly of fighting and killing each other in uniform, for nothing at all. Ye have much to think of. The state of your representation in the house, which is called the collective representation of the country demands your attention.

It is horrible that the lower classes must waste their lives and liberty to furnish means for their oppressors to oppress them yet more terribly. It is horrible that the poor must give in taxes what would save them and their families from hunger and cold; it is still more horrible that they should do this to furnish further means of their own abjectness and misery; but what words can express the enormity of the abuse that prevents them from choosing representatives with authority to enquire into

the manner in which their lives and labor, their happiness and innocence is expended, and what advantages result from their expenditure which may counterbalance so horrible and monstrous an evil. There is an outcry raised against amendment; it is called innovation and condemned by many unthinking people who have a good fire and plenty to eat and drink; hard hearted or thoughtless beings how many are famishing whilst you deliberate, how many perish to contribute to your pleasures. I hope that there[1] are none such as these native Irishmen, indeed I scarcely believe that there are.

Let the object of your associations (for I conceal not my approval of assemblies conducted with regularity, *peaceableness* and thought for any purpose,) be the amendment of these abuses, it will have for its object universal Emancipation, liberty, happiness, and virtue. There is yet another subject, "the Liberty of the Press." The liberty of the press consists in a right to publish any opinion on any subject which the writer may entertain. The Attorney General in 1793 on the trial of Mr. Perry, said, "I never will dispute the right of any man fully to discuss topics respecting government, and honestly to point out what he may consider a proper remedy of grievances."—The Liberty of the Press, is placed as a sentinel to alarm us when any attempt is made on our liberties.—It is this centinel, O Irishmen, whom I now awaken! I create to myself a freedom which exists not. There is no liberty of the press, for the subjects of British government.

It is really ridiculous to hear people yet boasting of

[1] In the original *their*, here and in the next line.

this inestimable blessing, when they daily see it successfully muzzled and outraged by the lawyers of the crown, and by virtue of what are called ex-officio informations. Blackstone says, that "if a person publishes what is improper, mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequences of his own temerity;" and Lord Chief Baron Comyns defines libel as "a contumely, or reproach, published to the defamation of the Government, of a magistrate, or of a private person."—Now, I beseech you to consider the words, mischievous, improper, illegal, contumely, reproach, or defamation. May they not make that mischievous, or improper, which they please? Is not law with them, as clay in the potter's hand? Do not the words, contumely, reproach, or defamation, express all degrees and forces of disapprobation? It is impossible to express yourself displeased at certain proceedings of Government, or the individuals who conduct it, without uttering a reproach. We cannot honestly point out a proper remedy of grievances with safety, because the very mention of these grievances will be reproachful to the personages who countenance them; and therefore will come under a definition of libel. For the persons who thus directly or indirectly undergo reproach, will say for their own sakes, that the exposure of their corruption is mischievous and improper; therefore, the utterer of the reproach is a fit subject for three years imprisonment. Is there any thing like the Liberty of the Press, in restrictions so positive, yet pliant, as these. The little freedom which we enjoy in this most important point, comes from the clemency of our rulers, or their fear, lest public opinion alarmed at the discovery of its enslaved state, should violently assert a right to extension and diffusion. Yet public opinion

may not always be so formidable, rulers may not always be so merciful or so timid: at any rate evils, and great evils do result from the present system of intellectual slavery, and you have enough to think of, if this grievance alone remained in the constitution of society. I will give but one instance of the present state of our Press.

A countryman of yours is now confined in an English gaol. His health, his fortune, his spirits, suffer from close confinement. The air which comes through the bars of a prison-grate, does not invigorate the frame nor cheer the spirits. But Mr. Finnerty, much as he has lost, yet retains the fair name of truth and honor. He was imprisoned for persisting in the truth. His judge told him on his trial, that truth and falsehood were indifferent to the law, and that if he owned the publication any consideration, whether the facts that it related were well or ill-founded, was totally irrelevant. Such is the libel law. Such the Liberty of the Press—there is enough to think of. The right of withholding your individual assent to war, the right of choosing delegates to represent you in the assembly of the nation, and that of freely opposing intellectual power, to any measures of Government of which you may disapprove, are in addition to the indifference with which the legislative and the executive power ought to rule their conduct towards professors of every religion enough to think of.

I earnestly desire peace and harmony:—peace, that whatever wrongs you may have suffered, benevolence and a spirit of forgiveness should mark your conduct towards those who have persecuted you. Harmony, that among yourselves may be no divisions, that Protestants and

Catholics unite in a common interest, and that whatever be the belief and principles of your countryman and fellow-sufferer, you desire to benefit his cause, at the same time that you vindicate your own, be strong and unbiassed by selfishness or prejudice—for Catholics, your religion has not been spotless, crimes in past ages have sullied it with a stain, which let it be your glory to remove. Nor Protestants, hath your religion always been characterized by the mildness of benevolence, which Jesus Christ recommended. Had it anything to do with the present subject I could account for the spirit of intolerance, which marked both religions; I will, however, only adduce the fact, and earnestly exhort you to root out from your own minds every thing which may lead to uncharitableness, and to reflect that yourselves, as well as your brethren, may be deceived. Nothing on earth is infallible. The Priests that pretend to it, are wicked and mischievous impostors; but it is an imposture which every one, more or less, assumes, who encourages prejudice in his breast against those who differ from him in opinion, or who sets up his own religion as the only right and true one, when no one is so blind as to see[1] that every religion is right and true, which makes men beneficent and sincere. I therefore, earnestly exhort both Protestants and Catholics to act in brotherhood and harmony, never forgetting, because the Catholics alone are heinously deprived of religious rights, that the Protestants and a certain rank of people, of every persuasion, share with them all else that is terrible galling and intolerable in the mass of political grievance.

[1] *Sic*, but probably we should read *so blind as not to see*.

In no case employ violence or falsehood. I cannot too often or too vividly endeavour to impress upon your minds, that these methods will produce nothing but wretchedness and slavery—that they will at the same time rivet the fetters, with which ignorance and oppression bind you to abjectness, and deliver you over to a tyranny, which shall render you incapable of renewed efforts. Violence will immediately render your cause a bad one. If you believe in a Providential God, you must also believe that he is a good one; and it is not likely, a merciful God would befriend a bad cause. Insincerity is no less hurtful than violence: those who are in the habits of either, would do well to reform themselves. A lying bravo will never promote the good of his country—he cannot be a good man. The courageous and sincere may, at the same time, successfully oppose corruption, by uniting their voice with that of others, or individually raise up intellectual opposition to counteract the abuses of Government and society. In order to benefit yourselves and your country to any extent, habits of sobriety, regularity, and thought, are previously so necessary, that without these preliminaries, all that you have done falls to the ground. You have built on sand. Secure a good foundation, and you may erect a fabric to stand for ever—the glory and the envy of the world!

I have purposely avoided any lengthened discussion on those grievances to which your hearts are from custom, and the immediate interest of the circumstances, probably most alive at present. I have not however wholly neglected them. Most of all have I insisted on their instant palliation and ultimate removal; nor have I

omitted a consideration of the means which I deem most effectual for the accomplishment of this great end. How far you will consider the former worthy of your adoption, so far shall I deem the latter probable and interesting to the lovers of human kind. And I have opened to your view a new scene—does not your heart bound at the bare possibility of your posterity possessing that liberty and happiness of which during our lives powerful exertions and habitual abstinence may give us a foretaste. Oh! if your hearts do not vibrate[1] at such as this; then ye are dead and cold—ye are not men.

I now come to the application of my principles, the conclusion of my address; and O Irishmen, whatever conduct ye may feel yourselves bound to pursue, the path which duty points to, lies before me clear and unobscured. Dangers may lurk around it; but they are not the dangers which lie beneath the footsteps of the hypocrite or temporizer.

For I have not presented to you the picture of happiness on which my fancy doats as an uncertain meteor to mislead honorable enthusiasm, or blindfold the judgment which makes virtue useful. I have not proposed crude schemes, which I should be incompetent to mature, or desired to excite in you any virulence against the abuses of political institution; where I have had occasion to point them out I have recommended moderation whilst yet I have earnestly insisted upon energy and perseverance; I have spoken of peace, yet declared that resistance is laudable; but the intellectual resistance which I recommend, I deem essential to

[1] In the original, *vitiate*.

the introduction of the millennium[1] of virtue, whose period every one can, so far as he is concerned, forward by his own proper power. I have not attempted to shew, that the Catholic claims or the claims of the people, to a full representation in Parliament, or any of those claims to real rights, which I have insisted upon as introductory to the ultimate claim of *all*, to universal happiness, freedom, and equality; I have not attempted, I say, to shew that these can be granted consistently with the spirit of the English Constitution: this is a point which I do not feel myself inclined to discuss, and which I consider foreign to my object. But I have shewn that these claims have for their basis, truth and justice, which are immutable, and which in the ruin of Governments shall rise like a Phœnix from their ashes.

Is any one inclined to dispute the possibility of a happy change in society? Do they say that the nature of man is corrupt, and that he was made for misery and wickedness? Be it so. Certain as are opposite conclusions, I will concede the truth of his, for a moment. —What are the means which I take for melioration? Violence, corruption, rapine, crime? Do I do evil, that good may come? I have recommended peace, philanthropy,[2] wisdom.—So far as my arguments influence, they will influence to these—and if there is any one *now* inclined to say, that "private vices are public benefits,"

Note. The excellence of the Constitution of Great Britain, appears to me, to be its indefiniteness and versatility, whereby it may be unresistingly accommodated to the progression of wisdom and virtue. Such accommodation I desire: but I wish for the cause before the effect. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

[1] In the original, *inroduction of the millenium.*

[2] Mis-spelt *philanthrophy* here and in the two subsequent instances, in which the word occurs in this pamphlet.

and that peace, philanthropy, and wisdom, will, if once they gain ground, ruin the human race; he may revel in his happy dreams; though were *I* this man, I should envy Satan's Hell. The wisdom and charity of which I speak, are the *only* means which I will countenance, for the redress of your grievances, and the grievances of the world. So far as they operate, I am willing to stand responsible for their *evil* effects. I expect to be accused of a desire for renewing in Ireland the scenes of revolutionary horror, which marked the struggles of France twenty years ago. But it is the renewal of that unfortunate æra, which I strongly deprecate, and which the tendency of this address is calculated to obviate. For can burthens be borne for ever, and the slave crouch and cringe the while. Is misery and vice so consonant to man's nature, that he will hug it to his heart?—but when the wretched one in bondage, beholds the emancipator near, will he not endure his misery awhile with hope and patience, then, spring to his preserver's arms, and start into a man.

It is my intention to observe the effect on your minds, O Irishmen! which this address dictated by the fervency of my love, and hope will produce. I have come to this country to spare no pains where expenditure[1] may purchase your real benefit. The present is a crisis, which of all others, is the most valuable for fixing the fluctuation of public feeling; as far as my poor efforts may have succeeded in fixing it to virtue, Irishmen, so far shall I esteem myself happy. I intend this address as introductory to another.

[1] In a letter to Godwin on the subject of this pamphlet (Hogg's Life, Vol. II, p. 95), Shelley explains that the word *expenditure* is used "in a moral sense."

The organization of a society, whose institution shall serve as a bond to its members, for the purposes of virtue, happiness, liberty, and wisdom, by the means of intellectual opposition to grievances, would probably be useful. For the formation of such a society, I avow myself anxious.

Adieu, my friends! May every Sun that shines on your green Island see the annihilation of an abuse, and the birth of an Embryon of melioration! Your own hearts—may they become the shrines of purity and freedom, and never may smoke to the Mammon of unrighteousness, ascend from the unpolluted altar of their devotion!

No. 7, *Lower Sackville-street. Feb.* 22.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have now been a week in Dublin, during which time I have endeavoured to make myself more accurately acquainted with the state of the public mind, on those great topics of grievances which induced me to select Ireland as a theatre, the widest and fairest, for the operations of the determined friend of religious and political freedom.

The result of my observations has determined me to propose, an association for the purposes of restoring Ireland to the prosperity which she possessed before the Union Act; and the religious freedom, which the involuntariness of faith, ought to have taught all monopolists of Heaven, long, long ago, that every one had a right to possess.

For the purpose of obtaining the Emancipation of the Catholics, from the penal laws that aggrieve them, and a Repeal of the Legislative Union act: and grounding upon the remission of the church-craft and oppression, which caused these grievances; *a plan of amendment and regeneration in the moral and political state of society, on a comprehensive and systematic philanthropy, which shall be sure, though slow in its projects; and as it is without the rapidity and danger of revolution,*

so will it be devoid of the time servingness of temporizing reform—which in its deliberative capacity, having investigated the state of the government of England, shall oppose those parts of it, by intellectual force, which will not bear the touch-stone of reason.

For information respecting the principles which I possess, and the nature and spirit of the association which I propose, I refer the reader to a small pamphlet, which I shall publish on the subject, in the course of a few days.

I have published the above address (written in England) in the cheapest possible form, and have taken pains that the remarks which it contains, should be intelligible to the most uneducated minds. Men are not slaves and brutes, because they are poor: it has been the policy of the thoughtless, or wicked of the higher ranks, (as a proof of the decay, of which policy, I am happy to see the rapid success of a comparatively enlightened system of education,) to conceal from the poor the truths which I have endeavoured to teach them. In doing so, I have but translated my thoughts into another language; and as language is only useful as it communicates ideas, I shall think my style so far good, as it is successful as a means to[1] bring about the end which I desire, on any occasion, to accomplish.

A Limerick Paper, which I suppose, professes to support certain *loyal* and *John Bullish* principles of freedom —has, in an essay for advocating the Liberty of the Press,

[1] The word *to* is repeated in the original.

the following clause: "For lawless license of discussion never did we advocate, nor do we now."—What is lawless license of discussion? Is it not as indefinite as the words, *contumely, reproach, defamation,* that allow at present, such latitude to the outrages that are committed on the free expression of individual sentiment. Can they not see that what is rational will stand by its reason, and what is true stand by its truth, as all that is foolish will fall by its folly, and all that is false be controverted by its own falsehood.—Liberty gains nothing by the reform of politicians of this stamp, any more than it gains from a change of Ministers in London. What at present, is contumely and defamation, would at the period of this Limerick amendment, be "lawless license of discussion;" and such would be the mighty advantage which this doughty champion of liberty proposes to effect.

I conclude with the words of Lafayette—a name endeared, by its peerless bearer, to every lover of the human race. "For a nation to love Liberty it is sufficient that she knows it, to be free it is sufficient that she wills it."[1]

[1] The final quotation marks are wanting in the pamphlet.

FINIS.

PROPOSALS FOR AN ASSOCIATION.

[The *Proposals for an Association* appeared on Monday, the 2nd of March, 1812, according to Mr. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, p. 172). It is an 8vo. pamphlet, consisting of title-page and 18pp. of text, without head-lines, but numbered centrally. The title-page (reproduced opposite) is undated. The pamphlet is printed in the roughest style, with the worst possible ink, on the worst possible paper; and many letters are dropped; but it is not particularly incorrect, except in regard to the words *philanthropy*, *philanthropic*, &c., in which, oftener than not, there is an *h* after the *p* in the last syllable. Though these redundant aspirates are here omitted, I have not thought it worth while to record the particular instances of correctness or the reverse, or to alter and record certain minor errors in grammar, &c., for which Shelley is probably responsible. The text is given from Lord Carlingford's copy, for the loan of which I am indebted to his Lordship's courtesy.—H. B. F.]

PROPOSALS

FOR AN

ASSOCIATION

OF THOSE

PHILANTHROPISTS,

WHO CONVINCED OF THE INADEQUACY OF THE MORAL AND POLITICAL STATE OF IRELAND TO PRODUCE BENEFITS WHICH ARE NEVERTHELESS ATTAINABLE ARE WILLING TO UNITE TO ACCOMPLISH ITS REGENERATION.

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Dublin:

PRINTED BY I. ETON, WINETAVERN-STREET.

PROPOSALS

FOR

AN ASSOCIATION, &c.

I propose an association which shall have for its immediate objects, Catholic Emancipation, and the Repeal of the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland; and grounding on the removal of these grievances, an annihilation or palliation, of whatever moral or political evil, it may be within the compass of human power to assuage or eradicate.

Man cannot make occasions, but he may seize those that offer. None are more interesting to Philanthropy, than those which excite the benevolent passions, that generalize and expand private into public feelings, and make the hearts of individuals vibrate not merely for themselves, their families, and their friends, but for posterity, *for a people;* till their country becomes the world, and their family the sensitive creation.

A recollection of the absent, and a taking into consideration the interests of those unconnected with ourselves, is a principal source of that feeling which generates occasions, wherein a love for human kind may become eminently useful and active. Public topics of fear and hope, such as sympathize with general grievance,

or hold out hopes of general amendment, are those on what the Philanthropist would dilate with the warmest feeling. Because these are accustomed to place individuals at a distance from self; for in proportion as he is absorbed in public feeling, so will a consideration of his proper benefit be generalized. In proportion as he feels with, or for a nation or a world, so will man consider himself less as that centre, to which we are but too prone to believe that every line of human concern does, or ought to converge.

I should not here make the trite remark, that selfish motive biasses, brutalizes, and degrades the human mind, did it not thence follow, that to seize those occasions wherein the opposite spirit predominates, is a duty which Philanthropy imperiously exacts of her votaries; that occasions like these are the proper ones for leading mankind to their own interest; by awakening in their minds a love for the interest of their fellows. A plant that grows in every soil, though too often it is choaked by tares before its lovely blossoms are expanded. Virtue produces pleasure, it is as the cause to the effect; I feel pleasure in doing good to my friend, because I love him. I do not love him for the sake of that pleasure.

I regard the present state of the public mind in Ireland, to be one of those occasions, which the ardent votary of the religion of Philanthropy dare not leave unseized. I perceive that the public interest is excited, I perceive that individual interest has, in a certain degree, quitted individual concern to generalize itself with universal feeling. Be the Catholic Emancipation a thing of great or of small misfortune, be it a means of adding happiness

to four millions of people, or a reform which will only give honor to a few of the higher ranks, yet a benevolent and disinterested feeling has gone abroad, and I am willing that it should never subside. I desire that means should be taken with energy and expedition, in this important, yet fleeting crisis, to feed the unpolluted flame, at which nations and ages may light the torch of Liberty and Virtue!

It is my opinion that the claims of the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland, if gained to-morrow, would in a very small degree, aggrandize their liberty and happiness. The disqualifications principally affect the higher orders of the Catholic persuasion, these would principally be benefited by their removal. Power and wealth do not benefit, but injure the cause of virtue and freedom. I am happy however, at the near approach of this emancipation, because I am inimical to all disqualifications for opinion. It gives me pleasure to see the approach of this enfranchisement, not for the good which it will bring with it, but because it is a sign of benefits approaching, a prophet of good about to come; and therefore, do I sympathize with the inhabitants of Ireland, in this great cause; a cause, which, though in its own accomplishment, will add not one comfort to the cottager, will snatch not one from the dark dungeon, will root not out one vice, alleviate not one pang, yet it is the fore-ground of a picture, in the dimness of whose distance, I behold the lion lay down with the lamb, and the infant play with the basilisk—For it supposes the extermination of the eyeless monster bigotry, whose throne has tottered for two hundred years. I hear the teeth of the palsied beldame Superstition chatter, and I see her descending to

the grave! Reason points to the open gates of the Temple of Religious Freedom, Philanthropy kneels at the altar of the common God! There, wealth and poverty, rank and abjectness, are names known but as memorials of past time: meteors which play over the loathsome pool of vice and misery, to warn the wanderer where dangers lie. Does a God rule this illimitable universe; are you thankful for his beneficence—do you adore his wisdom—do you hang upon his altar the garland of your devotion? Curse not your brother, though he hath enwreathed with his flowers of a different hue; the purest religion is that of Charity, its loveliness begins to proselyte the hearts of men. The tree is to be judged of by its fruit. I regard the admission of the Catholic claims, and the Repeal of the Union Act, as blossoms of that fruit, which the Summer Sun of improved intellect and progressive virtue are destined to mature.

I will not pass unreflected on the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland, nor will I speak of it as a grievance so tolerable or unimportant in its own nature as that of Catholic disqualification. The latter affects few, the former affects thousands. The one disqualifies the rich from power, the other impoverishes the peasant, adds beggary to the city, famine to the country, multiplies abjectness, whilst misery and crime play into each other's hands, under its withering auspices. I esteem then, the annihilation of this second grievance to be something more than a mere sign of coming good. I esteem it to be in itself a substantial benefit. The aristocracy of Ireland (for much as I may disapprove other distinctions than those of virtue and talent, I consider it useless, hasty, and violent, not for the present to acquiesce in their continuance.) The aris-

tocracy of Ireland suck the veins of its inhabitants and consume the blood in England. I mean not to deny the unhappy truth, that there is much misery and vice in the world. I mean to say that Ireland shares largely of both. —England has made her poor; and the poverty of a rich nation will make its people very desperate and wicked.

I look forward then, to the redress of both these grievances, or rather, I perceive the state of the public mind, that precedes them as the crisis of beneficial innovation. The latter I consider to be the cause of the former, as I hope it will be the cause of more comprehensively beneficial amendments. It forms that occasion which should energetically and quickly be occupied. The voice of the whole human race; their crimes, their miseries, and their ignorance, invoke us to the task. For the miseries of the Irish poor, exacerbated by the union of their country with England, are not peculiar to themselves. England, the whole civilized world[1] with few exceptions, is either sunk in disproportioned abjectness, or raised to unnatural elevation. The Repeal of the Union Act will place Ireland on a level, so far as concerns the well-being of its poor, with her sister nation. Benevolent feeling has gone out in this country in favor of the happiness of its inhabitants—may this feeling be corroborated, methodized, and continued! May it never fail!—But it will not be kept alive by each citizen sitting quietly by his own fire-side, and saying that things are going on well, because the rain does not beat on *him*, because *he* has books and leisure to read them, because *he* has money and is at liberty to accumulate luxuries to

[1] In the original, the comma is inserted after *world*, instead of after *England*.

himself. Generous feeling dictates no such sayings. When the heart recurs to the thousands who have no liberty and no leisure, it must be rendered callous by long contemplation of wretchedness, if after such recurrence it can beat with contented evenness.—Why do I talk thus? Is there any one who doubts that the present state of politics and morals is wrong? They say—shew us a safe method of improvement. There is no safer than the corroboration and propagation of generous and Philanthropic feeling, than the keeping continually alive a love for the human race, than the putting in train causes which shall have for their consequences virtue and freedom, and because I think that individuals acting singly, with whatever energy can never effect[1] so much as a society; I propose that all those, whose views coincide with those that I have avowed, who perceive the state of the public mind in Ireland, who think the present a fit opportunity for attempting to fix its fluctuations at Philanthropy; who love all mankind, and are willing actively to engage in its cause, or passively to endure the persecutions of those who are inimical to its success; I propose to these to form an association for the purposes, first, of debating on the propriety of whatever measures may be agitated, and secondly, for carrying, by united or individual exertion, such measures into effect when determined on. That it should be an association for discussing knowledge and virtue throughout the poorer classes of society in Ireland, for co-operating with any enlightened system of education; for discussing topics calculated to throw light on any methods of alleviation of moral and political evil, and as far as lays in its power, actively interesting itself in whatever occasions may arise for benefiting mankind.

[1] In the original, *affect.*

When I mention Ireland, I do not mean to confine the influence of the association to this, or to any other country, but for the time being. Moreover, I would recommend, that this association should attempt to form others, and to actuate them with a similar spirit, and I am thus indeterminate in my description of the association which I propose; because I conceive that an assembly of men meeting, to do all the good that opportunity will permit them to do, must be in its nature, as indefinite and varying as the instances of human vice and misery that precede, occasion, and call for its institution.

As political institution and its attendant evils constitute the majority of those grievances, which Philanthropists desire to remedy, it is probable that existing Governments will frequently become the topic of their discussion, the results of which may little coincide with the opinions which those who profit by the supineness of human belief, desire to impress upon the world. It is probable that this freedom may excite the odium of certain well-meaning people, who pin their faith upon their grandmother's[1] apron-string. The minority in number are the majority in intellect and power. The former govern the latter, though it is by the sufferance of the latter that this originally delegated power is exercised. This power is become hereditary, and hath ceased to be necessarily united with intellect.

It is certain, therefore, that any questioning of established principles would excite the abhorrence and opposition of those who derived power and honour (such as it is) from their continuance.

[1] In the original, *grandmothers*, without the apostrophe.

As the association which I recommend would question those principles (however they may be hedged in with antiquity and precedent) which appeared ill adapted for the benefit of human kind; it would probably excite the odium of those in power. It would be obnoxious to the government, though nothing would be farther from the views of associated philanthropists than attempting to subvert establishments forcibly, or even hastily. Aristocracy would oppose it, whether oppositionists or ministerialists, (for philanthropy is of no party,) because its ultimate views look to a subversion of all factitious distinctions, although from its immediate intentions I fear that aristocracy can have nothing to dread. The priesthood would oppose it, because a union of church and state; contrary to the principles and practice of Jesus, contrary to that equality which he fruitlessly endeavoured to teach mankind, is of all institutions that from the rust of antiquity are called venerable, the least qualified to stand free and cool reasoning, because it least conduces to the happiness of human kind: yet did either the minister, the peer, or the bishop, know their true interest, instead of that virulent opposition which some among them have made to freedom and philanthropy, they would rejoice and co-operate with the diffusion and corroboration of those principles that would remove a load of paltry equivocation, paltrier grandeur, and of wigs that crush into emptiness the brains below them; from their shoulders, and by permitting them to reassume the degraded and vilified title of man would preclude the necessity of mystery and deception, would bestow on them a title more ennobling, and a dignity which though it would be without the gravity of an ape, would possess the ease and consistency of a man.

For the reasons above alleged, falsely, prejudicedly, and narrowly will those very persons whose ultimate benefit is included in the general good whose promotion is the essence of a philanthropic association, will they persecute those who have the best intentions towards them, malevolence towards none.

I do not, therefore, conceal that those who make the favour of government the sunshine of their moral day, confide in the political creed makers of the hour, are willing to think things that are rusty and decayed venerable, and are unenquiringly satisfied with evils as these are, because they find them established and unquestioned as they do sunlight and air when they come into existence; that they had better not even think of philanthropy. I conceal not from them that the discountenance which government will show to such an association as I am desirous to establish will come under their comprehensive definition of danger: that virtue and any assembly instituted under its auspices demands a voluntariness on the part of its devoted individuals to sacrifice personal to public benefit; and that it is possible that a party of beings associated for the purposes of disseminating virtuous principles, may considering the ascendancy which long custom has conferred on opposite motives to action, meet with inconveniences that may amount to personal danger. These considerations are, however, to the mind of the philanthropist as is a drop to an ocean; they serve by their possible existence as tests whereby to discover the really virtuous man from him who calls himself a patriot for dishonourable and selfish purposes. I propose then to such as think with me, a Philanthropic Association, in spite of the danger that may attend the attempt. I do

not this beneath the shroud of mystery and darkness. I propose not an Association of Secrecy. Let it open as the beam of day. Let it rival the sunbeam in its stainless purity, as in the extensiveness of its effulgence.

I disclaim all connection with insincerity and concealment. The latter implies the former, as much as the former stands in need of the latter. It is a very latitudinarian system of morality that permits its professor to employ bad means for any end whatever. Weapons which vice *can* use are unfit for the hands of virtue. Concealment implies falsehood; it is bad, and can therefore never be serviceable to the cause of philanthropy.

I propose, therefore, that the association shall be established and conducted in the open face of day, with the utmost possible publicity. It is only vice that hides itself in holes and corners,[1] whose effrontery shrinks from scrutiny, whose cowardice lets I *dare not* wait upon I would, like the poor cat in the adage.[2] But the eye of virtue, eagle-like, darts through the undazzling beam of eternal truth, and from the undiminished fountain of its purity gathers wherewith to vivify and illuminate a universe.

I have hitherto abstained from inquiring whether the association which I recommend be or be not consistent with the English constitution. And here it is fit, briefly to consider what a constitution is.

[1] Comma not in the original.

[2] This seems to have been a favourite quotation of Shelley's from *Macbeth*. It will be remembered that he used it as a motto at the head of Chapter IX of *Zastrozzi*, where, however, he stops short at *I would*, perhaps finding the "poor cat" not sufficiently impressive for so solemn an occasion.

Government can have no rights, it is a delegation for the purpose of securing them to others. Man becomes a subject of government, not that he may be in a worse but that he may be in a better state than that of unorganized society. The strength of government is the happiness of the governed. All government existing for the happiness of others is just only so far as it exists by their consent, and useful only so far as it operates to their well-being. Constitution is to government what government is to law. Constitution may, in this view of the subject, be defined to be, not merely something constituted for the benefit of any nation or class of people, but something constituted by themselves for their own benefit. The nations of England and Ireland have no constitution, because at no one time did the individuals that compose them constitute a system for the general benefit: if a system determined on, by a very few, at a great length of time; if magna charta, the bill of rights, and other usages for whose influence the improved state of human knowledge is rather to be looked to, than any system which courtiers pretend to exist and perhaps believe to exist; a system whose spring of agency they represent as something secret undiscoverable and awful as the law of nature. If these make a constitution then England has one. But if (as I have endeavoured to show they do not) a constitution is something else, then the speeches of kings or commissioners, the writings of courtiers, and the journals of parliament, which teem with its glory, are full of political cant; exhibit the skeleton of national freedom, and are fruitless attempts to hide evils in whose favor they cannot prove an alibi. As therefore, in the true sense of the expression, the spot of earth on which we live is destitute of consti-

tuted Government, it is impossible to offend against its principles, or to be with justice accused of wishing to subvert what has no real existence. If a man was accused of setting fire to a house, which house never existed, and from the nature of things could not have existed, it is impossible that a jury in their senses would find him guilty of arson. The English constitution then, could not be offended by the principles of virtue and freedom. In fact, the manner in which the Government of England has varied since its earliest establishment, proves that its present form is the result of a progressive accommodation to existing principles. It has been a continual struggle for liberty on the part of the people, and an uninterrupted attempt at tightning the reins of oppression and encouraging ignorance and imposture by the oligarchy to whom the first William parcelled out the property of the aborigines at the conquest of England by the Normans. I hear much of its being a tree so long growing which to cut down is as bad as cutting down an oak where there are no more. But the best way, on topics similar to these, is, to tell the plain truth, without the confusion and ornament of metaphor. I call expressions similar to these political cant, which, like the songs of Rule Britannia and God save the king, are but abstracts of the caterpillar creed of courtiers, cut down to the taste and comprehension of a mob; the one to disguise to an alehouse politician the evils of that dĕvilish practice of war, and the other to inspire among clubs of all descriptions a certain feeling which some call loyalty and others servility. A philanthropic association has nothing to fear from the English constitution, but it may expect danger from its government. So far however from thinking this an argument against its institution, establishment, and augmenta-

tion, I am inclined to rest much of the weight of the cause which my duties call upon me to support, on the very fact that government forcibly interferes when the opposition that is made to its proceedings is professedly and undeniably nothing but intellectual. A good cause may be shewn to be good, violence instantly renders bad what might before have been good. "Weapons that falsehood can use are unfit for the hands of truth."—Truth can reason, and falsehood cannot.

A political or religious system may burn and imprison those who investigate its principles; but it is an invariable proof of their falsehood and hollowness. Here then is another reason for the necessity of a Philanthropic Association, and I call upon any fair and rational opponent to controvert the argument which it contains; for there is no one who even calls himself a philanthropist that thinks personal danger or dishonour terrible in any other light than as it affects his usefulness.

Man has a heart to feel, a brain to think, and a tongue to utter. The laws of his moral as of his physical nature are immutable, as is every thing of nature; nor can the ephemeral institutions of human society take away those rights, annihilate or strengthen the duties that have for their basis the imperishable relations of his constitution.

Though the parliament of England were to pass a thousand bills to inflict upon those who determined to utter their thoughts, a thousand penalties, it could not render that criminal which was in its nature innocent before the passing of such bill.

Man has a right to feel, to think, and to speak, nor can any acts of legislature destroy that right. He will feel, he must think, and he *ought* to give utterance to those thoughts and feelings with the readiest sincerity and the strictest candour. A man must have a right to do a thing before he can have a duty; this right must permit before his duty can enjoin him to any act. Any law is bad which attempts to make it criminal to do what the plain dictates within the breast of every man tells him that he ought to do.

. . . .

The English government permits a fanatic to assemble any number of persons to teach them the most extravavagant and immoral systems of faith; but a few men meeting to consider its own principles are marked with its hatred, and pursued by its jealousy.

The religionist who agonizes the death-bed of the cottager, and by picturing the hell, which hearts black and narrow as his own alone could have invented, and which exists but in their cores, spreads the uncharitable doctrines which devote *heretics* to eternal torments, and represents heaven to be what earth is, a monopoly in the hands of certain favoured ones whose merit consists in slavishness, whose success is the reward of sycophancy. Thus much is permitted, but a public inquiry that involves any doubt of their rectitude into the principles of government is not permitted. When Jupiter and a countryman were one day walking out, conversing familiarly on the affairs of earth, the countryman listened to Jupiter's assertions on the subject for some time in acquiescence, at length happening to hint a doubt, Jupiter threatened him with his thunder; ah, ha, says the coun-

tryman, now Jupiter I know that you are wrong; you are always wrong when you appeal to your thunder. The essence of virtue is disinterestedness. Disinterestedness is the quality which preserves the character of virtue distinct from that of either innocence or vice. This, it will be said, is mere assertion. It is so: but it is an assertion, whose truth, I believe, the hearts of philanthropists are disinclined to deny. Those who have been convinced by their grandam of the doctrine of an original hereditary sin, or by the apostles of a degrading philosophy of the necessary and universal selfishness of man cannot be philanthropists.[1] Now as an action, or a motive to action, is only virtuous so far as it is disinterested, or partakes (I adopt this mode of expression to suit the taste of some) of the nature of generalized self-love, then reward or punishment, attached even by omnipotence to any action, can in no wise make it either good or bad.

It is no crime to act in contradiction to an English judge or an English legislator, but it is a crime to transgress the dictates of a monitor, which feels the spring of every motive, whose throne is the human sensorium, whose empire the human conduct. Conscience is a Government before which, all others sink into nothingness; it surpasses, and where it can act supersedes, all other, as nature surpasses art, as God surpasses man.

In the preceding pages, during the course of an investigation of the possible objections which might be urged by Philanthropy, to an association such as I recommend, as I have rather sought to bring forward than conceal my

[1] In the pamphlet there is a comma instead of this period.

principles, it will appear that they have their origin from the discoveries in the sciences of politics and morals, which preceded and occasioned the revolutions of America and France. It is with openness that I confess, nay with pride I assert, that they are so. The names of Paine and Lafayette will outlive the poetic aristocracy of an expatriated Jesuit,[1] as the executive of a bigoted policy will die before the disgust at the sycophancy of their eulogists can subside.

It will be said, perhaps, that much as principles, such as these may appear, marked on the outside with peace, liberty, and virtue, that their ultimate tendency is to a Revolution, which like that of France, will end in bloodshed, vice, and slavery. I must offer, therefore, my thoughts on that event, which so suddenly and so lamentably extinguished the overstrained hopes of liberty which it excited. I do not deny that the Revolution of France was occasioned by the literary labors of the Encyclopedists. When we see two events together, in certain cases, we speak of one as the cause, the other the effect. We have no other idea of cause and effect, but that which arises from necessary connection; it is therefore, still doubtful whether D'Alembert, Boulanger, Condorcet, and other celebrated characters, were the causes of the overthrow of the ancient monarchy of France. Thus much is certain,[2] that they contributed greatly to the extension and diffusion of knowledge, and that knowledge is incompatible with slavery. The French nation was bowed to the dust by ages of unintermitted despotism. They were plundered and insulted by a succession of oligarchies,

[1] See Memoires de Jacobinisme, par l'Abbe Baruel. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

[2] In the pamphlet the comma is after *Thus* instead of *certain*.

each more blood-thirsty and unrelenting than the foregoing. In a state like this, her soldiers learned to fight for Freedom on the plains of America, whilst at this very conjuncture, a ray of science burst through the clouds of bigotry that obscured the moral day of Europe. The French were in the lowest state of human degradation, and when the truth, unaccustomed to their ears, that they were men and equals was promulgated, they were the first to vent their indignation on the monopolizers of earth, because they were most glaringly defrauded of the immunities of nature.

Since the French were furthest removed by the sophistications of political institution from the genuine condition of human beings, they must have been most unfit for that happy state of equal law, which proceeds from consummated civilization, and which demands habits of the strictest virtue before its introduction.

The murders during the period of the French Revolution, and the despotism which has since been established, prove that the doctrines of Philanthropy and Freedom, were but shallowly understood. Nor was it until after that period, that their principles became clearly to be explained, and unanswerably to be established.

Voltaire was the flatterer of Kings, though in his heart he despised them:—so far has he been instrumental in the present slavery of his country. Rousseau gave licence by his writings, to passions that only incapacitate[1] and contract the human heart:—so far hath he prepared the necks of his fellow-beings for that yoke of galling and

[1] In the original, *incapicitate*.

dishonourable servitude, which at this moment, it bears. Helvetius and Condorcet established principles, but if they drew conclusions, their conclusions were unsystematical and devoid of the luminousness and energy of method: —they were little understood in the Revolution. But this age of ours is not stationary. Philosophers have not developed the great principles of the human mind, that conclusions from them should be unprofitable and impracticable. We are in a state of continually progressive improvement. One truth that had been discovered can never die, but will prevent the revivification of its apportioned opposite falsehood. By promoting truth and discouraging its opposite, the means of Philanthropy are principally to be forwarded.—Godwin wrote during the Revolution of France, and certainly his writings were totally devoid of influence, with regard to its purposes. Oh! that they had not!—In the Revolution of France, were engaged men, whose names are inerasible from the records of Liberty. Their genius penetrated with a glance the gloom and glare which Church-craft and State-craft had spread before the imposture and villainy of their establishments. They saw the world—were they men? Yes! They felt for it! They risked their lives and happiness for its benefit!—Had there been more of these men France would not now be a beacon to warn us of the hazard and horror of Revolutions, but a pattern of society, rapidly advancing to a state of perfection, and holding out an example for the gradual and peaceful regeneration of the world. I consider it to be one of the effects of a Philanthropic Association, to assist in the production of such men as these, in an extensive developement of those germs of excellence, whose favorite soil is the cultured garden of the human mind.

Many well-meaning persons may think that the attainment of the good, which I propose, as the ultimatum of Philanthropic exertion, is visionary and inconsistent with human nature: they would tell me not to make people happy, for fear of overstocking the world, and to permit those who found dishes placed before them on the table of partial nature, to enjoy their superfluities in quietness, though millions of wretches crowded around but to pick a morsel,[1] which morsel was still refused to the prayers of agonizing famine.

I cannot help thinking this an evil, nor help endeavouring, by the safest means that I can devise, to palliate at present, and in fine to eradicate this evil; war, vice, and misery are undeniably bad, they embrace all that we can conceive of temporal and eternal evil. Are we to be told that these are remedyless, because the earth would, in case of their remedy, be overstocked? That the rich are still to glut, that the ambitious are still to plan, that the fools whom these knaves mould, are still to murder their brethren and call it glory, and that the poor are to pay with their blood, their labor, their happiness, and their innocence, for the crimes and mistakes which the hereditary monopolists of earth commit? Rare sophism! How will the heartless rich hug thee to their bosoms, and lull their conscience into slumber with the opiate of thy reconciling dogmas! But when the Philosopher and Philanthropist contemplates the universe, when he perceives existing evils that admit of amendment, and hears tell of other evils, which, in the course of sixty centuries, may again derange the system of happiness, which

[1] See Malthus on Population. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

the amendment is calculated to produce, does he submit to prolong a positive evil, because if that were eradicated after a millennium of 6000 years (for such space of time would it take to people the earth) another evil would take place.

To how contemptible a degradation of grossest credulity will not prejudice lower the human mind!—We see in Winter that the foliage of the trees is gone, that they present to the view nothing but leafless branches—we see that the loveliness of the flower decays, though the root continues in the earth. What opinion should we form of that man, who, when he walked in the freshness of the spring, beheld the fields enamelled with flowers, and the foliage bursting from the buds, should find fault with all this beautiful order, and murmur his contemptible discontents because winter must come, and the landscape be robbed of its beauty for a while again? Yet this man is Mr. Malthus. Do we not see that the laws of nature perpetually act by disorganization and reproduction, each alternately becoming cause and effect. The analysis[1] that we can draw from physical to moral topics are of all others the most striking.

Does any one yet question the possibility of inducing radical reform of moral and political evil. Does he object from that impossibility to the association which I propose, which I frankly confess to be one of the means whose instrumentality I would employ to attain this reform. Let them look to the methods which I use. Let them put my object out of their view and propose

[1] Probably a misprint for *analogies*.

their own, how would they accomplish it? By diffusing virtue and knowledge, by promoting human happiness. Palsied be the hand, for ever dumb be the tongue that would by one expression convey sentiments differing from these: I will use no bad means for any end whatever, know then ye philanthropists, to whatever profession of faith, or whatever determination of principles, chance, reason, or education, may have conducted you, that the endeavours of the truly virtuous necessarily converge to one point, though it be hidden from them what point that is: they all labour for one end, and that controversies concerning the nature of that end, serve only to weaken the strength which for the interest of virtue should be consolidated.

The diffusion of true and virtuous principles (for in the first principles of morality *none* disagree) will produce the best of possible terminations.

I invite to an Association of Philanthropy those of whatever ultimate expectations, who will employ the same means that I employ; let their designs differ as much as they may from mine, I shall rejoice at their co-operation; because if the ultimatum of my hopes be founded on the unity of truth, I shall then have auxiliaries in its cause, and if it be false I shall rejoice that means are not neglected for forwarding that which is true.

The accumulation of evil which Ireland has for the last twenty years sustained, and considering the unremittingness of its pressure I may say patiently sustained; the melancholy prospect which the unforeseen conduct of the Regent of England holds out of its continuance

demands of every Irishman, whose pulses have not ceased to throb with the life-blood of his heart, that he should individually consult, and unitedly determine on some measures for the liberty of his countrymen. That those measures should be pacific though resolute, that their movers should be calmly brave, and temperately unbending, though the whole heart and soul should go with the attempt, is the opinion which my principles command me to give.

And I am induced to call an Association, such as this occasion demands, an Association of philanthropy, because good men ought never to circumscribe their usefulness by any name which denotes their exclusive devotion to the accomplishment of its signification.

When I began the preceding remarks I conceived that on the removal of the restrictions from the Regent a ministry less inimical than the present to the interests of liberty would have been appointed. I am deceived and the disappointment of the hopes of freedom on this subject afford an additional argument towards the necessity of an Association.

I conclude these remarks which I have indited principally with a view of unveiling my principles, with a proposal for an Association for the purposes of catholic emancipation, a repeal of the union act, and grounding upon the attainment of these objects a reform of whatever moral and political evil it may be within the compass of human power to remedy.

Such as are favourably inclined towards the institution would highly gratify the proposer, if they would

personally communicate with him on this important subject, by which means the plan might be matured, errors in the proposer's original system be detected, and a meeting for the purpose convened with that resolute expedition which the nature of the present crisis demands.

No. 7, Lower Sackville-Street.

FINIS.

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

[In addition to the two Irish pamphlets, Shelley appears to have got printed in Dublin the broadside entitled *Declaration of Rights*, which afterwards led to the imprisonment of his Irish servant Daniel Hill (or Healy) for uttering the same without an imprint. Although this curious document was reprinted by Richard Carlile in *The Republican* for the 24th of September, 1819, and figures in Lowndes's Bibliographer's Manual (Bohn's Edition, p. 2374) as having occurred in a certain copy of *Queen Mab* not now forthcoming, it remained for Mr. Rossetti to place it before the present generation of Shelley's readers in an article contributed to *The Fortnightly Review* for January, 1871, entitled "Shelley in 1812-13." Mr. Rossetti (p. 71) points out the resemblances between this Declaration and two such Documents of the French Revolution, "the one adopted by the Constituent Assembly in August, 1789, and the other proposed in April, 1793, by Robespierre." Mr. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, p. 323) calls attention to the recurrence, in the *Declaration of Rights*, of certain thoughts and phrases from the *Proposals for an Association*. For a concise account of Shelley's proceedings at Barnstaple with this hand-bill, see p. 37 of the memoir prefixed to Vol. I of Mr. Rossetti's last edition of Shelley's Poetical Works (3 vols. 1878). The *Declaration* is a roughly printed affair,—a single leaf measuring 14$\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 8$\frac{15}{16}$ inches. There are two copies preserved in the Public Record Office; and Lord Carlingford has the copy sent officially to Mr. (afterwards Sir Francis) Freeling, Secretary of the Post Office, by the Post Office Agent at Holyhead, under circumstances fully detailed by Mr. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, pp. 309 *et seq.*). By his Lordship's courtesy, the text is here given from that copy.—H. B. F.]

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

GOVERNMENT has no rights; it is a delegation from several individuals for the purpose of securing their own. It is therefore just, only so far as it exists by their consent, useful only so far as it operates to their well-being.

2

IF these individuals think that the form of government which they, or their forefathers constituted is ill adapted to produce their happiness, they have a right to change it.

3

Government is devised for the security of rights. The rights of man are liberty, and an equal participation of the commonage of nature.

4

As the benefit of the governed, is, or ought to be the origin of government, no men can have any authority that does not expressly emanate from their will.

5

Though all governments are not so bad as that of Turkey, yet none are so good as they might be; the majority of every country have a right to perfect their government, the minority should not disturb them, they ought to secede, and form their own system in their own way.

6

All have a right to an equal share in the benefits, and burdens of Government. Any disabilities for opinion, imply by their existence, barefaced tyranny on the side of government, ignorant slavishness on the side of the governed.

7

The rights of man in the present state of society, are only to be secured by some degree of coercion to be exercised on their violator. The sufferer has a right that the degree of coercion employed be as slight as possible.

8

It may be considered as a plain proof of the hollowness of any proposition, if power be used to enforce instead of reason to persuade its admission. Government is never supported by fraud until it cannot be supported by reason.

9

No man has a right to disturb the public peace, by personally resisting the execution of a law however bad. He ought to acquiesce, using at the same time the utmost powers of his reason, to promote its repeal.

10

A man must have a right to act in a certain manner before it can be his duty. He may, before he ought.

11

A man has a right to think as his reason directs, it is a duty he owes to himself to think with freedom, that he may act from conviction.

12

A man has a right to unrestricted liberty of discussion, falsehood is a scorpion that will sting itself to death.

13

A man has not only a right to express his thoughts, but it is his duty to do so.

14

No law has a right to discourage the practice of truth. A man ought to speak the truth on every occasion, a duty can never be criminal, what is not criminal cannot be injurious.

15

Law cannot make what is in its nature virtuous or innocent, to be criminal, any more than it can make what is criminal to be innocent. Government cannot make a law, it can only pronounce that which was the law before its organisation, viz. the moral result of the imperishable relations of things.

16

The present generation cannot bind their posterity. The few cannot promise for the many.

17

No man has a right to do an evil thing that good may come.

18

Expediency is inadmissible in morals. Politics are only sound when conducted on principles of morality. They are, in fact, the morals of nations.

19

Man has no right to kill his brother, it is no excuse that he does so in uniform. He only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder.

20

Man, whatever be his country, has the same rights in one place as another, the rights of universal citizenship.

21

The government of a country ought to be perfectly indifferent to every opinion. Religious differences, the bloodiest and most rancorous of all, spring from partiality.

22

A delegation of individuals, for the purpose of securing their rights, can have no undelegated power of restraining the expression of their opinion.

23

Belief is involuntary; nothing involuntary is meritorious or reprehensible. A man ought not to be considered worse or better for his belief.

24

A Christian, a Deist, a Turk, and a Jew, have equal rights: they are men and brethren.

25

If a person's religious ideas correspond not with your own, love him nevertheless. How different would yours have been, had the chance of birth placed you in Tartary or India!

26

Those who believe that Heaven is, what earth has been, a monopoly in the hands of a favored few, would do well to reconsider their opinion: if they find that it came from their priest or their grandmother, they could not do better than reject it.

27

No man has a right to be respected for any other possessions, but those of virtue and talents. Titles are tinsel, power a corruptor, glory a bubble, and excessive wealth, a libel on its possessor.

28

No man has a right to monopolize more than he can enjoy; what the rich give to the poor, whilst millions are starving, is not a perfect favour, but an imperfect right.

29

Every man has a right to a certain degree of leisure and liberty, because it is his duty to attain a certain degree of knowledge. He may before he ought.

30

Sobriety of body and mind is necessary to those who would be free, because, without sobriety a high sense of philanthropy cannot actuate the heart, nor cool and determined courage, execute its dictates.

31

The only use of government is to repress the vices of man. If man were to day sinless, to-morrow he would have a right to demand that government and all its evils should cease.

Man! thou whose rights are here declared, be no longer forgetful of the loftiness of thy destination. Think of thy rights; of those possessions which will give thee virtue and wisdom, by which thou mayest arrive at happiness and freedom. They are declared to thee by one who knows thy dignity, for every hour does his heart swell with honorable pride in the contemplation of what thou mayest attain, by one who is not forgetful of thy degeneracy, for every moment brings home to him the bitter conviction of what thou art.

Awake!—arise!—or be for ever fallen.

[In collating the broadside *Declaration* with the reprint in *The Republican* for the 24th of September, 1819, I have only found a single verbal variation, an evident misprint, *we* for *they*, in the third line of article 26. The punctuation is also practically the same. We shall perhaps never know whether Shelley furnished Carlile with the copy of the broadside from which the reprint was made; but it is not impossible,—scarcely improbable, as the poet had certainly a feeling of friendly interest in the more daringly practical agitator, which friendly interest was reciprocal. For on the one hand we have the "letter of five sheets on Carlile's affair" which Shelley had "just finished" when he wrote to Mr. Gisborne on the 6th of November, 1819, and which will be found in Vol. IV; and, on the other hand, the fourteen volumes of *The Republican* contain, I should say, a greater number of articles on and references to Shelley than any other periodical issued during his life. The particular number containing the *Declaration of Rights* contains also a rashly outspoken letter from Carlile to the Prince Regent, "On his answer to the Address and Petition of the Citizens of London, in Common Council assembled, praying his Royal Highness to institute an enquiry into the conduct of the Magistrates and Yeomanry Cavalry of Manchester,"—on the occasion of the massacre which inspired Shelley to write *The Mask of Anarchy*. The *Declaration* is followed in *The Republican* by three abstracts of "Benefits," which are extremely well set forth, and might or might not be from memoranda of Shelley's for the treatise on Reform which he projected at the end of 1819. The first of these abstracts is headed "BENEFITS OF THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE, *Concerning which it is presumed few will disagree.*" The second is headed "OTHER BRANCHES OF REFORM, *Concerning which it is presumed a great part of the consistent Friends of Freedom and of Human Happiness will be agreed.*" The third is headed "*Benefits likely to accrue from a Reform in the House of Commons, or properly speaking, a Revolution in the Affairs of Great Britain and Ireland.*" These notes do not appear to be connected with Shelley's Irish Campaign; but, if his, might have been sent to Carlile with a copy of the *Declaration*, which was appropriate enough to the political situation in 1819. Some newspaper reports &c., that *are* connected with the Irish Campaign,—reports of Shelley's speech at a meeting in Fishamble Street Theatre, Dublin, and other relative documents, will be given in an Appendix. Meantime, this opportunity will serve to point out a characteristic persistency of ideas: let the reader compare the passage in the *Proposals for an Association* beginning with *The religionist who agonizes*, at p. 380 (repeated in part in Article 26 of the *Declaration of Rights*), with the sublime sixth and seventh stanzas of Canto VIII of *Laon and Cythna;* and he will see a notable example of the growth of great things from small.—H. B. F.]

A LETTER
TO LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

[In a letter to Godwin dated "Cwm-Rhayader, June 11, 1812" (Hogg's *Life*, Vol. II, page 129), Shelley writes thus: "What do you think of Eaton's trial and sentence? I mean not to insinuate that this poor bookseller has any characteristics in common with Socrates, or Jesus Christ, still the spirit which pillories and imprisons him, is the same which brought them to an untimely end—still, even in this enlightened age, the moralist and reformer may expect coercion analogous to that used with the humble yet zealous imitator of their endeavours. I have thought of addressing the public on the subject, and indeed have begun an outline of the address. May I be favoured with your remarks on it before I send it to the world?" By the 29th of July the essay on this subject seems to have been written and printed. Hogg (Vol. II, page 152) represents Shelley as writing on that date that it had been printed in London; but without seeing Shelley's letter we cannot be sure of the precise bearing of his words. Mr. J. R. Chanter, in *Sketches of the Literary History of Barnstaple* (1866, page 55) gives a circumstantial account of the printing of the tract by Mr. Syle of Barnstaple; and Mr. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, page 345) accepts this statement. The greater part of the edition of this work, *A Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, is said to have been destroyed by Mr. Syle on his observing the nature of it; but fifty copies were sent to Mr. Hookham of Bond Street, and Mr. Chanter says that they were distributed and could not be got back. Their transmission is mentioned in Shelley's letter to Hookham of the 18th of August 1812 (*Shelley Memorials*, page 38); and it was from a copy of the pamphlet preserved by Hookham that Lady Shelley reprinted in the *Memorials* those portions which, being personal to Mr. Eaton and Lord Ellenborough, had not already been reprinted in the Note to *Queen Mab* on the words *I will beget a Son* (See Poetical Works, Vol. IV, page 441 for text, and pages 506 *et seq.* for note). From the same copy the pamphlet is now, by the kindness of Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, given in its integrity. It will be seen that some very trenchant passages, which have lain *perdu* since 1812, now reappear. As in the case of *The Necessity of Atheism*, Shelley revised his work when inserting it in *Queen Mab*. The *Letter to Lord Ellenborough* is a small 8vo., or large old fashioned 12mo.: I cannot say which, for there are no signatures to mark the sheets, and Lady Shelley's copy is bound up in one precious volume with *The Necessity of Atheism* and the two Irish pamphlets. It consists of title-page as given opposite, Advertisement on a second leaf as here reprinted, and pages 1 to 23 of text, without headlines, numbered centrally with Arabic figures in square brackets. It bears no printer's name.—H. B. F.]

A LETTER

TO

LORD ELLENBOROUGH,

Occasioned by the Sentence which he passed on

Mr D. I. EATON,

As Publisher of

The THIRD PART of PAINE's AGE OF REASON.

Deorum offensa, Diis curæ.

—It is contrary to the mild spirit of the Christian Religion, for no sanction can be found under that dispensation which will warrant a Government to impose disabilities and penalties upon any man, on account of his religious opinions. [*Hear, Hear.*]

Marquis Wellesley's Speech. Globe, July 2.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I have waited impatiently for these last four months, in the hopes, that some pen, fitter for the important task, would have spared me the perilous pleasure of becoming the champion of an innocent man.—This may serve as an excuse for delay, to those who think that I have let pass the aptest opportunity—but it is not to be supposed that in four short months the public indignation, raised by Mr. Eaton's unmerited suffering, can have subsided.

LETTER.

MY LORD,

As the station to which you have been called by your country is important, so much the more awful is your responsibility, so much the more does it become you to watch lest you inadvertently punish the virtuous and reward the vicious.

You preside over a court which is instituted for the suppression of crime, and to whose authority the people submit on no other conditions than that its decrees should be conformable to justice.

If it should be demonstrated that a judge had condemned an innocent man, the bare existence of laws in

conformity to which the accused is punished, would but little extenuate his offence. The inquisitor when he burns an obstinate heretic may set up a similar plea, yet few are sufficiently blinded by intolerance to acknowledge its validity. It will less avail such a judge to assert the policy of punishing one who has committed no crime. Policy and morality ought to be deemed synonymous in a court of justice, and he whose conduct has been regulated by the latter principle, is not justly amenable to any penal law for a supposed violation of the former. It is true, my Lord, laws exist which suffice to screen you from the animadversion of any constituted power, in consequence of the unmerited sentence which you have passed upon Mr. Eaton; but there are no laws which screen you from the reproof of a nation's disgust, none which ward off the just judgment of posterity, if that posterity will deign to recollect you.

By what right do you punish Mr. Eaton? What but antiquated precedents, gathered from times of priestly and tyrannical domination, can be adduced in palliation of an outrage so insulting to humanity and justice? Whom has he injured? What crime has he committed? Wherefore may he not walk abroad like other men and follow his accustomed pursuits? What end is proposed in confining this man, charged with the commission of no dishonorable action? Wherefore did his aggressor avail himself of popular prejudice, and return no answer but one of common place contempt, to a defence of plain and simple sincerity? Lastly, when the prejudices of the jury, as Christians, were strongly and unfairly inflamed[1] against this injured man as a Deist, wherefore

[1] See the Attorney General's speech. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

did not you, my Lord, check such unconstitutional pleading, and desire the jury to pronounce the accused innocent or criminal[1] without reference to the particular faith which he professed?

In the name of justice, what answer is there to these questions? The answer which Heathen Athens made to Socrates, is the same with which Christian England must attempt to silence the advocates of this injured man—"He has questioned established opinions."—Alas! the crime of enquiry is one which religion never has forgiven. Implicit faith and fearless enquiry have in all ages been irreconcileable enemies. Unrestrained philosophy has in every age opposed itself to the reveries of credulity and fanaticism.—The truths of astronomy demonstrated by Newton have superseded astrology; since the modern discoveries in chemistry the philosopher's stone has no longer been deemed attainable. Miracles of every kind have become rare, in proportion to the hidden principles which those who study nature have developed. That which is false will ultimately be controverted by its own falsehood. That which is true needs but publicity to be acknowledged. It is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use power and coercion, not reasoning and persuasion,[2] to procure its admission.—Falsehood skulks in holes and corners, "it lets I dare not wait upon I would, like the poor cat in the adage,"[3] except

[1] By Mr. Fox's bill (1791) Juries are, in cases of libel, judges both of the law and the fact. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

[2] In *Queen Mab* we read simply, *coercion, not reasoning.*

[3] Mr. Chanter in his *Literary History of Barnstaple* (p. 55) says of the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, "I am enabled by the kindness of Mr. Barry to give a line as a specimen. The writer is drawing a

when it has power, and then, as it was a coward, it is a tyrant; but the eagle-eye of truth darts thro' the undazzling sunbeam of the immutable and just, gathering thence wherewith to vivify and illuminate a universe!

Wherefore, I repeat, is Mr. Eaton punished?—Because he is a Deist?—and what are you my Lord?—A Christian. Ha then! the mask is fallen off; you persecute him because his faith differs from your's. You copy the persecutors of Christianity in your actions, and are an additional proof that your religion is as bloody, barbarous, and intolerant as theirs.—If some deistical Bigot in power (supposing such a character for the sake of illustration) should in dark and barbarous ages have enacted a statute, making the profession of christianity criminal, if you my Lord were a christian bookseller and Mr. Eaton a judge, those arguments which you consider adequate to justify yourself for the sentence which you have passed must likewise suffice in this suppositionary case to justify Mr. Eaton, in sentencing you to Newgate and the pillory for being a christian. Whence is any right derived but

contrast between error and truth, and at the close of it exclaims, 'Error skulks in holes and corners, letting I dare not wait upon I would, like the poor cat i' th' adage, but the eagle eye of truth darts through the undazzling sunbeam of the immutable and just, gathering wherewith to vivify and illumine the universe.'" Mr. MacCarthy in *Shelley's Early Life* (p. 349) maintains two opposite views on the subject of this passage,—one that, as the passage is neither in *Queen Mab* nor in the *Shelley Memorials*, the whole *Letter to Lord Ellenborough* does not exist in those two volumes,—the other that the passage may really have been quoted from the *Proposals for an Association*, where a passage almost identical is to be found (see p. 376 of this volume). This view is based on the supposition that the *Proposals* was given by Shelley as a pattern to the printer of the *Letter*. It turns out that Mr. Barry's memory was pretty accurate, and that Shelley really did make use of this favourite quotation from *Macbeth* no less than four times. See note at p. 135 of Vol. III. In the present case, Shelley added by way of foot-note the word *Shakespeare*.

that which power confers for persecution? Do you think to convert Mr. Eaton to your religion by embittering his existence? You might force him by torture to profess your tenets, but he could not believe them, except you should make them credible, which perhaps exceeds your power. Do you think to please the God you worship by this exhibition of your zeal? If so, the Demon to whom some nations offer human hecatombs is less barbarous than the Deity of civilized society.

You consider man as an accountable being—but he can only be accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will.

Belief and disbelief are utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition. They are the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas which compose any proposition. Belief is an involuntary operation of the mind,[1] and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement.—Volition is essential to merit or demerit. How then can merit or demerit be attached to what is distinct from that faculty of the mind whose presence is essential to their being? I am aware that religion is founded on the voluntariness of belief, as it makes it a subject of reward and punishment; but before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover, which we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life.

[1] See *The Necessity of Atheism*, p. 306 of this volume, and *A Refutation of Deism*, pp. 52 and 53 of Vol. II.

If the law 'de heretico comburendo' has not been formally repealed, I conceive that from the promise held out by your Lordship's zeal, we need not despair of beholding the flames of persecution rekindled in Smithfield. Even now the lash that drove Descartes and Voltaire from their native country, the chains which bound Galileo, the flames which burned Vanini, again resound:—And where? in a nation that presumptuously calls itself the sanctuary of freedom. Under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press; in a civilized and enlightened country,[1] a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a Deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. Does the Christian God, whom his followers eulogize as the Deity of humility and peace; he, the regenerator of the world, the meek reformer, authorize one man to rise against another, and because lictors are at his beck, to chain and torture him as an Infidel?

When the Apostles went abroad to convert the nations, were they enjoined to stab and poison all who disbelieved the divinity of Christ's mission; assuredly they would have been no more justifiable in this case, than he is at present who puts into execution the law which inflicts pillory and imprisonment on the Deist.

Has not Mr. Eaton an equal right to call your Lordship an Infidel, as you have to imprison him for promulgating a different doctrine from that which you profess? —What do I say!—Has he not even a stronger plea?— The word *Infidel* can only mean any thing when applied

[1] These six words are omitted from the passage in *Queen Mab*.

to a person who professes that which he disbelieves. The test of truth is an undivided reliance on its inclusive powers;—the test of conscious falsehood is the variety of the forms under which it presents itself, and its tendency towards employing whatever coercive means may be within its command, in order to procure the admission of what is unsusceptible of support from reason or persuasion. A dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favor of a man, who depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who daringly avowing his unwillingness[1] to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the activity and break the spirit of their promulgator, by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

I hesitate not to affirm that the opinions which Mr. Eaton sustained, when undergoing that mockery of a trial at which your Lordship presided, appear to me more true and good than those of his accuser;—but were they false as the visions of a Calvinist, it still would be the duty of those who love liberty and virtue, to raise their voice indignantly against a reviving system of persecution, against the coercively repressing any opinion which, if false, needs but the opposition of truth; which if true, in spite of force, must ultimately prevail.

Mr. Eaton asserted that the scriptures were, from beginning to end, a fable and imposture,[2] that the Apostles were liars and deceivers. He denied the miracles, re-

[1] In *Queen Mab* we read *unwillingness or incapacity*, and, in the next line, *energies* instead of *activity*.

[2] See the Attorney General's Speech. [SHELLEY'S NOTE.]

surrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.—He did so, and the Attorney General denied the propositions which he asserted, and asserted those which he denied. What singular conclusion is deducible from this fact? None, but that the Attorney General and Mr. Eaton sustained two opposite opinions. The Attorney General puts some obsolete and tyrannical laws in force against Mr. Eaton, because he publishes a book tending to prove that certain supernatural events, which are supposed to have taken place eighteen centuries ago, in a remote corner of the world, did not actually take place. But how are the truth or falsehood of the facts in dispute relevant to the merit or demerit attachable to the advocates of the two opinions? No man is accountable for his belief, because no man is capable of directing it. Mr. Eaton is therefore totally blameless. What are we to think of the justice of a sentence, which punishes an individual against whom it is not even attempted to attach the slightest stain of criminality?

It is asserted that Mr. Eaton's opinions are calculated to subvert morality—How? What moral truth is spoken of with irreverence or ridicule in the book which he published? Morality, or the duty of a man and a citizen, is founded on the relations which arise from the association of human beings, and which vary with the circumstances produced by the different states of this association.—This duty in similar situations must be precisely the same in all ages and nations.—The opinion contrary to this has arisen from a supposition that the will of God is the source or criterion of morality: It is plain that the utmost exertion of Omnipotence could not cause that to be virtuous which actually is vicious. An

all-powerful Demon might indubitably annex punishments to virtue and rewards to vice, but could not by these means effect the slightest change in their abstract and immutable natures.—Omnipotence could vary by a providential interposition the relations of human society; —in this latter case, what before was virtuous would become vicious, according to the necessary and natural result of the alteration; but the abstract natures of the opposite principles would have sustained not the slightest change; for instance, the punishment with which society restrains the robber, the assassin, and the ravisher is just, laudable, and requisite. We admire and respect the institutions which curb those who would defeat the ends for which society was established;—but, should a precisely similar coercion be exercised against one who merely expressed his disbelief of a system admitted by those entrusted with the executive power, using at the same time no methods of promulgation but those afforded by reason, certainly this coercion would be eminently inhuman and immoral; and the supposition that any revelation from an unknown power, avails to palliate a persecution so senseless, unprovoked, and indefensible, is at once to destroy the barrier which reason places between vice and virtue, and leave to unprincipled fanaticism a plea, whereby it may excuse every act of frenzy, which its own wild passions, not the inspirations of the Deity, have engendered.

Moral qualities are such as only a human being can possess. To attribute them to the Spirit of the Universe, or to suppose that it is capable of altering them, is to degrade God into man, and to annex to this incomprehensible being, qualities incompatible with any *possible*

definition of his nature.—It may here be objected—ought not the Creator to possess[1] the perfections of the creature? No. To attribute to God the moral qualities of man, is to suppose him susceptible of passions which, arising out of corporeal organization, it is plain that a pure spirit cannot possess. A bear is not perfect except he is rough, a tyger is not perfect if he be not voracious, an elephant is not perfect if otherwise than docile. How *deep* an argument must that not be which proves that the Deity is as rough as a bear, as voracious as a tyger, and as docile as an elephant! But even suppose with the vulgar, that God is a venerable old man, seated on a throne of clouds, his breast the theatre of various passions, analogous to those of humanity, his will changeable and uncertain as that of an earthly king,—still goodness and justice are qualities seldom nominally denied him, and it will be admitted that he disapproves of any action incompatible with these qualities. Persecution for opinion is unjust. With what consistency, then, can the worshippers of a Deity whose benevolence they boast, embitter the existence of their fellow being, because his ideas of that Deity are different from those which they entertain. —Alas! there is no consistency in those persecutors who worship a benevolent Deity; those who worship a Demon would alone act consonantly to these principles, by imprisoning and torturing in his name.

Persecution is the only name applicable to punishment inflicted on an individual in consequence of his opinions.—What end is persecution designed to answer? Can it convince him whom it injures? Can it prove to the people the falsehood of his opinions? It may make him

[1] In the original *profess.*

a hypocrite and them cowards, but bad means can promote no good end. The unprejudiced mind looks with suspicion on a doctrine that needs the sustaining hand of power.

Socrates was poisoned because he dared to combat the degrading superstitions in which his countrymen were educated. Not long after his death, Athens recognized the injustice of his sentence; his accuser Melitus was condemned, and Socrates became a demigod.

Jesus Christ was crucified because he attempted to supersede the ritual of Moses with regulations more moral and humane—his very judge made public acknowledgment of his innocence, but a bigotted and ignorant mob demanded the deed of horror.—Barrabbas the murderer and traitor was released. The meek reformer Jesus was immolated to the sanguinary Deity of the Jews. Time rolled on, time changed the situations, and with them, the opinions of men.[1]

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event, and testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief rolling through the lapse of ages,[2] acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus

[1] This passage was wholly re-written in *Queen Mab* (Poetical Works, Vol. IV, pp. 507-8), and accompanied by the foot-note, "Since writing this note I have seen reason to suspect, that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea." Mr. Rossetti records on the authority of Trelawny that Shelley wished to revoke this "hasty afterthought." See Mr. Rossetti's 1878 edition of the Poetical Works, Vol. I, p. 149.

[2] In *Queen Mab* Shelley here inserted the words *met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and* . . .

became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

Christianity is now the established religion; he who attempts to disprove[1] it must behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion, tho', if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessor, in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, murder,[2] and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is.[3] We derive from our ancestors a belief[4] thus fostered and supported.—We quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance.—Does not analogy favour[5] the opinion, that as like other systems it has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that as violence and falsehood,[6] not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind; so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete,[7] and that men will then laugh as heartily at grace, faith,

[1] In *Queen Mab* we read, *impugn it, must be contented to behold.*

[2] In *Queen Mab, assassination.*

[3] Three very trenchant lines are here interpolated in *Queen Mab.* See Poetical Works, Vol. IV, p. 508.

[4] In *Queen Mab, faith.*

[5] *Analogy seems to favour,* in *Queen Mab.*

[6] In *Queen Mab* we read *violence, darkness, deceit.*

[7] In *Queen Mab* we find here the germ of that fine utterance on Milton in the *Defence of Poetry.* The interpolation here is *that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities.*

redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish Saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, by its self-evident excellence and fitness,[1] the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate upon the future obsoleteness of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason. It would endure as long as they endured, it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, physical and moral, which, depending[2] on our organization, and relative situations, must remain acknowledged so long as man is man.—It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that had the Jews not been a barbarous and[3] fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed. Man! the very existence of whose most cherished opinions depends from a thread so feeble, arises out of a source so equivocal, learn at least humility; own at least that it is possible for thyself also to have been seduced by education and circumstance into the admission of tenets destitute of rational proof, and the truth of which has not yet been satisfactorily demonstrated. Acknowledge at least that the falshood of thy brother's opinions is no sufficient reason for his meriting thy

[1] This phrase is not in *Queen Mab*.

[2] In *Queen Mab* we read, *facts, whose evidence, depending*. . . . .

[3] The words *barbarous and*, are omitted in *Queen Mab*.

hatred.—What! because a fellow being disputes the reasonableness of thy faith, wilt thou punish him with torture and imprisonment? If persecution for religious opinions were admitted by the moralist, how wide a door would not be opened by which convulsionists of every kind might make inroads on the peace of society! How many deeds of barbarism and blood would not receive a sanction!—But I will demand, if that man is not rather entitled to the respect than the discountenance of society, who, by disputing a received doctrine, either proves its falshood and inutility, thereby aiming at the abolition of what is false and useless, or giving to its adherents an opportunity of establishing its excellence and truth.—Surely this can be no crime. Surely the individual who devotes his time to fearless and unrestricted inquiry into the grand questions arising out of our moral nature, ought rather to receive the patronage, than encounter the vengeance, of an enlightened legislature. I would have you to know, my Lord, that fetters of iron cannot bind or subdue the soul of virtue. From the damps and solitude of its dungeon it ascends free and undaunted, whither thine, from the pompous seat of judgment, dare not soar. I do not warn you to beware lest your profession as a Christian, should make you forget that you are a man;—but I warn you against festinating that period, which, under the present coercive system, is too rapidly maturing, when the seats of justice shall be the seats of venality and slavishness, and the cells of Newgate become the abode of all that is honorable and true.

I mean not to compare Mr. Eaton with Socrates or Jesus; he is a man of blameless and respectable cha-

racter, he is a citizen unimpeached with crime; if, therefore, his rights as a citizen and a man have been infringed, they have been infringed by illegal and immoral violence. But I will assert that should a second Jesus arise among men; should such a one as Socrates again enlighten the earth, lengthened imprisonment and infamous punishment (according to the regimen of persecution revived by your Lordship) would effect, what hemlock and the cross have heretofore effected, and the stain on the national character, like that on Athens and Judea, would remain indelible, but by the destruction of the history in which it is recorded. When the Christian Religion shall have faded from the earth, when its memory like that of Polytheism now shall remain, but remain only as the subject of ridicule and wonder, indignant posterity would attach immortal infamy to such an outrage; like the murder of Socrates, it would secure the execration of every age.

The horrible and wide wasting enormities which gleam like comets thro' the darkness of gothic and superstitious ages, are regarded by the moralist as no more than the necessary effects of known causes: but when an enlightened age and nation signalizes itself by a deed, becoming none but barbarians and fanatics, Philosophy itself is even induced to doubt whether human nature will ever emerge from the pettishness and imbecility of its childhood. The system of persecution at whose new birth, you, my Lord, are one of the presiding midwives, is not more impotent and wicked than inconsistent. The press is loaded with what are called (ironically I should conceive) *proofs* of the Christian Religion: these books are replete with invective and calumny against Infidels,

they presuppose that he who rejects Christianity must be utterly divested of reason and feeling. They advance the most unsupported assertions and take as first principles the most revolting dogmas. The inferences drawn from these assumed premises are imposingly logical and correct; but if a foundation is weak, no architect is needed to foretell the instability of the superstructure.—If the truth of Christianity is not disputable, for what purpose are these books written? If they are sufficient to prove it, what further need of controversy? *If God has spoken, why is not the universe convinced?*[1] If the Christian Religion needs deeper learning, more painful investigation, to establish its genuineness, wherefore attempt to accomplish that by force, which the human mind can alone effect with satisfaction to itself? If, lastly, its truth *cannot* be demonstrated, wherefore impotently attempt to snatch from God the government of his creation, and impiously assert that the Spirit of Benevolence has left that knowledge most essential to the well being of man, the only one which, since its promulgation, has been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcileable hatred?—Either the Christian Religion is true, or it is not. If true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its Omnipotent Author is willing to allow;—if true, it admits of rational proof, and is capable of being placed equally beyond controversy, as the principles which have been established concerning matter and mind, by Locke and Newton; and in proportion to the usefulness of the fact in dispute, so must it be supposed that a benevolent being is anxious to procure the diffusion of its knowledge

[1] The surroundings of this favourite text are considerably altered in *Queen Mab*. See Poetical Works, Vol. IV, p. 510.

on the earth.—If false, surely no enlightened legislature would punish the reasoner, who opposes a system so much the more fatal and pernicious as it is extensively admitted; so much the more productive of absurd and ruinous consequences, as it is entwined by education, with the prejudices and affections of the human heart, in the shape of a popular belief.

Let us suppose that some half-witted philosopher should assert that the earth was the centre of the universe, or that ideas could enter the human mind independently of sensation or reflection. This man would assert what is demonstrably incorrect;—he would promulgate a false opinion. Yet would he therefore deserve pillory and imprisonment? By no means; probably few would discharge more correctly the duties of a citizen and a man. I admit that the case above stated is not precisely in point. The thinking part of the community has not received as indisputable the truth of Christianity as they have that of the Newtonian system. A very large portion of society, and that powerfully and extensively connected, derives its sole emolument from the belief of Christianity, as a popular faith.

To torture and imprison the asserter of a dogma, however ridiculous and false, is highly barbarous and impolitic:—How then, does not the cruelty of persecution become aggravated when it is directed against the opposer of an opinion *yet under dispute*, and which men of unrivalled acquirements, penetrating genius, and stainless virtue, have spent, and at last sacrificed, their lives in combating.

The time is rapidly approaching, I hope, that you, my

Lord, may live to behold its arrival, when the Mahometan, the Jew, the Christian, the Deist, and the Atheist, will live together in one community, equally sharing the benefits which arise from its association, and united in the bonds of charity and brotherly love.—My Lord, you have condemned an innocent man—no crime was imputed to him—and you sentenced him to torture and imprisonment. I have not addressed this letter to you with the hopes of convincing you that you have acted wrong. The most unprincipled and barbarous of men are not unprepared with sophisms, to prove that they would have acted in no other manner, and to shew that vice is virtue. But I raise my solitary voice, to express my disapprobation, so far as it goes, of the cruel and unjust sentence you passed upon Mr. Eaton; to assert, so far as I am capable of influencing, those rights of humanity, which you have wantonly and unlawfully infringed.

My Lord,

Yours, &c.

END OF VOL. I.

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